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Thesis

TREATMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF NATURE IN SHAKESPEARE

BY

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I

INTRODUCTION

Sidney Lanier, a poet and literary critic of the nineteenth century, mentioned three sources for poetic inspiration: man's relations with God, with his fellowmen, and with physical nature.[1] It is the last-named field, interpretation of nature, which mainly concerns this thesis. As the title suggests, we shall base our study on Nature in Shakespeare. First, however, since Shakespeare was both a poet and a dramatist, we shall present background material dealing with general values of nature in poetry and the drama.

The Beginnings of Nature Literature

In this preliminary sketch, let us consider how the childhood races of mankind interpreted nature. The late Stopford A. Brooke wrote-

> "It was in myth-making that the poetry of nature began. When Day came walking over the hills, when Night, contending with him, pushed him over the cliffs of the horizon, when the Dragon of Winter conquered the bright God of Summer; when the Cows of Indra let fall from their udders the milk of the rain; when a thousand thousand pictures like these were made in all the nations of the doings of the universe- the poetry of Nature was born, and man's natural interest in Nature, rising into love, was the source within us of its birth. This love of nature, rising into multitudinous forms as the imagination of man developed is natural from the beginning to man."[2]

According to this theory of Mr. Brooke's, nature entered literature by way of the myth and the myth has a universal origin. We conclude the same as he did, since we have found

1. Lanier, Sidney: Shakspere and His Forerunners, p.42.
2 Brooke, Stopford A.: Naturalism in English Poetry, p.17.

the earliest extant literatures of different nations to be a mythical representation of nature. Homer and Virgil reflected the elaborate nature cult of the ancient Greeks[1] and Romans;[2] the Malayans revealed a gruesome animal worship;[3] the Hawaiians told legends of the beauties of nature about them;[4] the Japanese explained in fanciful stories the creation of their islands;[5] the "Prince of the Sky" was the source of all life to the Persians;[6] the American Indians were themselves the "children of the sun";[7] and the Celtic myths meant fairyland.[8] In these ways primitive peoples, widely separated from one another, have interpreted nature.

Mr. Brooke signified not only that the myth originated in all nations rather than one, but also that natural interest in nature was the stimulus leading man to invent myths. If this is true that man instinctively seeks nature, what opportunities had primitive man for contact with nature? How much of his life was spent outdoors? Historians maintain that it was essentially lived in the open and that only gradually did man learn to construct shelters protecting him from onslaughts of wind and rain and from intense heat of sun.[9] Even in the days of civilized Rome, Ariovistus, a German, averred that his men had helped gain their prowess in battle

1. Homer. Odyssey.
2. Virgilius, Maro. Aeneid, Books 1-VI.
3. Skeat & Blagden. Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula. Vol.11, p. 173-374.
4. Colum, Padriac. Tales and Legends of Hawaii, p. 1-100.
5. Murray, David. Japan. Vol. 111, p. 30-50.
6. Ion, Theodore. Ottoman Literature, p. 1-17.
7. Radin, Paul. The Story of the American Indian, p. 121-151.
8. Rhys, John. Celtic Folklore, p. 1-75.
9. Van Loon. The Story of Mankind, p. 12.

by living fourteen years with no roof over their heads-

"Intellecturum quid invicti Germani, exercitatissimi in armis, qui inter annos XIV tectum non subissent virtute possent."[1]

And the savage pygmies of Africa live in the blackness of the forest today:[2]

Such a life close to nature involved struggling with natural elements in order to preserve physical existence. The Malayan had always wild beasts to fear, and he reacted by making gods of them.[3] Likewise, the Pueblo Indians, threatened with drouth in desert regions, entreated their Rain-makers to avert the danger. In elaborate ceremonies held in honor of the Rain-makers, these nature gods were importuned in a long prayer chanted in low, weird tones by the Rain-priests. Thus we have a nature hymn sung by a chorus-

"Come you, ascend the ladder; all come in; all come in; all sit down.
We were poor; we were poor; we were poor; we were poor; we were poor; we were poor;
When we came to this world through the poor place,
Where the body of water dried for our passing.
Banked-up clouds, cover the earth.
All come, all come, all come, all come, with your showers.
Descend to the base of the ladder, and stand still;
Bring your showers, and great rains.
All come, all come, all ascend, all come in, all sit down."[4]

Francis Gummere, who had made a study of mythology, regarded hymns of this type as the first literary form to develop in mythology; for they present childish fear and childish hope of gain. As he believed that these emotions would precede

1 Caesar, Julius. Gallic War, p.32.
2 Van Loon, Hendrik. The Story of Mankind, p.10.
3 Skeat & Blagden. Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula, Vol.II, p.173-374.
4 Radin, Paul. The Story of the American Indian, p.240.

in primitive folk as in children, curiosity about causes, he argued that the story myth of wonder would be later in appearing than the hymn to nature.[1]

Though the hymns express the response of elementary emotions to nature, and the stories necessitated considerable imaginative contemplation, both are connected with a mystic belief in the powers of nature. The pagans regarded with spiritual significance forces of nature that affected them; and they deified many natural elements, as we have seen that the Malayans and Pueblos did. To what extent environment may have influenced ancient people in their mysticism is illustrated in a quotation about the Anglo-Saxon in whose life winter and the terrors of the sea occasioned constant dread-

> "The religious beliefs of the Teuton received their most pronounced coloring from the rigors of his northern climate, from the Frost Giants, the personified forces of evil, with whom he battled. The kindly life-bringing spring and summer, which seemed to him earth's redeeming divinity, were soon slain by the arrows that came from the winter's quivers. Not even Thor, the wielder of the thunderbolt, nor Woden, the All-Father, delayed the inevitable hour when the dusk of winter came, when the voice of Baldur could no longer be heard awaking earth to a new life. The approach of the twilight of the gods was a stern reality to the Teuton."[2]

While he spent much of his time in contending with nature, primitive man had, on the other hand, opportunity to enjoy nature in its various aspects,- the opening flower, the rush of the brook, and even the storm itself. He watched the changing phenomena; and he wondered, knowing no scientific reasons for them. The sun's journey across the heavens by day

1 Gummere, Francis. The Beginnings of Poetry, p.442.
2 Halleck, Reuben. New English Literature, p. 12-13.

and that of the moon by night, the placing of the stars in the heavens, and the creation of the universe were popular themes capable of much imaginative treatment.[1]

Nature as a Field for the Poet

Passing now, in our criticism, to poetic values in nature, we observe that the subjects of mythology did not die with the ancients; but they continued to live, forming a storehouse of legends to be told and retold throughout the ages. Virgil did not worship nature gods;[2] but he recreated the myths of his ancestors and assimilated them into the structure of his epic, The Aeneid, where fabulous stories like those of Scylla[3], Charybdis,[4] and the harpies,[5] are utilized to enliven the hero's experiences, and the descent of Aeneas to the world below[6] accords with the superhuman character of one who was "goddess-born".[7] Much of Virgil's success in this poem is due to his art of painting word-pictures from nature, and arranging them in a way to harmonize with the " deep organ music of his verse". Tennyson pays homage to this power of Virgil's in-

"Landscape lover, lord of language."[8]

Milton's Comus, Keat's Endymion, Peele's Arraignment of Paris, and Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis are poems illustrating how other poets than Virgil have repainted pictures from mythology.

1 Shairp, J.C. Poetic Interpretation Of Nature, p. 9596.
2 Glover, T. R. Virgil, p. 273-305.
3 Virgilius, Maro. Aeneid, p. 63.
4 Ibid., loc.cit.
5 Ibid., p. 58.
6 Ibid., Book VI.
7 Ibid., p. 103.
8 Tennyson, Alfred. Poetic and Dramatic Works, p.511.

Word-painting as used by poets signifies vivid descriptive phrases. It is not the language of mythical literature alone; but it has a place, too, in other types of nature poetry. Tennyson, who appreciated Virgil's work as we noted above, used the stroke of a language-artist in sketching the fairy isle of Avilion, King Arthur's Elysian fields-

> "The island valley of Avilion
> Where falls nor hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair, with orchard lawns
> And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
> Where I shall heal me of my grievous wound."[1]

In this selection there are epithets which produce graphic mental pictures. It is easy to conceive the significance of such images as deep-meadow'd, bowery hollows, and summer sea; but it was the poet who phrased them.

Another quotation from Tennyson reveals his skill in word-painting-

> "As the fiery Sirius alters hue,
> And bickers into red and emerald."[2]

One who is not a poet might say: "Sirius is a very bright star which reminds one of a diamond, for it constantly changes from one color to another." The description here is as accurate in details as Tennyson's; but it contains no vivid pictures like fiery, alters hue, and bickers into red and emerald. These suggest esthetic enjoyment in watching "fiery Sirius."

Tennyson's attitude toward Sirius is akin to the feeling which Browning has shown in a poem written to symbolize Mrs.

1 Tennyson, Alfred, Poetic and Dramatic Works, p. 449.
2 Ibid., p. 145-6.

Browning and called My Star-

"All that I know
Of a certain star
Is, it can throw
(Like the angled spar)
Now a dart of red,
Now a dart of blue;
Till my friends have said
They would fain see, too,
My star that dartles the red and the blue.
Then it stops like a bird; like a flower, hangs furled:
They must solace themselves with the Saturn above it.
What matter to me if their star is a world?
Mine has opened its soul to me: therefore I love it."[1]

Like Tennyson, Browning regarded the star not as an object for scientific research, but for the emotional pleasure he gained from it. It is the scientist's field to dissect, analyze, and relate natural objects; but his point of view is material, while the poet seeks esthetic pleasure from the contemplation of nature. Emerson made a distinction similar to this in his essay, Nature. Therein he differentiated the woodcutter's stick of timber from the poet's tree, and contrasted the mercantile worth of a farm to its owner with the esthetic value of the same farm to the poet-

"The charming landscape which Isaw this morning is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this, Locke owns that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all parts, that is, the poet."[2]

This theory of Emerson's is similar to Leigh Hunt's that"one of the triumphs of poetry is to associate its remembrance with the beauties of nature."[3]

The most direct form of poetry in which a poet may express

1 Browning, Robert. Poetic and Dramatic Works, p.185.
2 Emerson Ralph W. Nature, Addresses, and Lectures, p.14.
3 Hunt, Leigh. Leigh Hunt as Poet and Essayist, p.477.

his emotional response to nature is the lyric. It is often short, and sometimes appears as a song. In it the author reflects in poetic language some mood or fancy of his. Lyrics deal with many subjects, but we are interested here only in the lyric of nature. To a Daisy is a lyric in which the author has sympathy for the small flower that he has crushed in the mowing-

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipp'd flower
Thou'st met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r
Thou bonie gem."[1]

This poem of Burns' illustrates the subjective quality which enables the lyrist to interpret immediately, without intervention of characters or plot, what he actually feels. All lyrics, however, are not isolated. Many are found combined with other types of poetry. We shall note later how Tennyson used lyrics in the narrative poem, The Princess, and how Shakespeare introduced songs into his plays.

In different nature poems there is a varying degree of vividness with which emotion is portrayed. For example, take first a stanza from Across the Fields by Walter Crane-

"Now comes the scent of fallen hay,
And flowers strew the foot-worn clay,
And summer breathes a passing sigh
As westward rolls the day's gold eye,
And Time with Labor ends his day
Across the fields."[2]

Mr. Crane may have intended to create a hazy atmosphere in this poem; and, if so, he has succeeded, for he has shown an

1 Holt, Lucius . The Leading English Poets from Chaucer to Browning, p. 286.
2 Stedman, Edmund. A Victorian Anthology, p.503.

emotional reaction to the passing of the day and also to the passing of summer. But what that reaction was we can not estimate: we do not know whether he was happy or sad or both that summer was departing.

In contrast to the impression of confused emotions in the poem above, let us turn next to a selection from Coleridge's Ancient Mariner-

> "The stars were dim and thick the night,
> The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd white,
> From the sails the dew did drip,
> Till clomb above the eastern bar
> The horned moon, with one bright star
> Within the nether tip." [1]

Here the dominant mood is weirdness which is particularly vivid. Every image associated with the situation gives an uncanny impression,- the dim stars, the dew dripping from the sails, the horned moon with one bright star within the nether tip. Not only has Coleridge associated eerie portents, but he has also related them to those on board the ship with a view to climax, the most weird effect being secured by the last image presented. Winchester's Literary Criticism maintains that associating objects with similar connotations as Coleridge has done is a work of the imagination and that it requires a literary artist to express vividly the proper relationships of these conceived objects.[2]

Imagination may become fanciful as an instrument of the emotions, if it is ruled in no way by the intellect.[3] By the use of realistic objects like stars and dew, Coleridge kept his picture from being too chimerical. While poetry

1 Coleridge, Samuel. Poetical Works, p. 150.
2 Winchester, Caleb. Literary Criticism, p. 127.
3 Ibid., p. 126.

is emotional, the feeling expressed therein ranges from shallow to deep. Shelley's pictures of nature were buoyant and striking as in the lines from The Cloud-

> "I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
> From the seas and the streams;
> I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
> In their noonday dreams." [1]

But the appeal is directed for the most part to our outward senses. We enjoy visualizing the images Shelley created, yet it is usually in their concrete forms they imprint themselves into our minds. However, the final picture of the "leaves when laid in their noonday dreams" is imaginative and artistic and stimulates us to muse and reflect on what we ourselves have seen in nature; and, when we see again the drooping leaves at noon, we are apt to interpret them as Shelley did for us.

Some poets, however, read more deeply into the meaning of nature than Shelley did. In Tintern Abbey Wordsworth suggested that the youth should return to the scenes of his boyhood and observe nature not simply with the visible eye that sees things which cannot go unseen, but through contemplation to learn the spiritual meanings of nature.[2] The guidance of the intellect among the spiritual emotions would be essential in this case, for to contemplate is to think. Milton's poem, Lycidas, is an elegy bewailing the death of his friend, Edward King, who has been drowned. Toward the close of the poem, Milton no longer sorrows; for he has imagined King in the light of immortality. He interprets his newly-gained pleasure and belief by a figure from nature: King's death is the sun setting

1 Holt, Lucius. The Leading English Poets from Chaucer to Browning, p. 534.
2 Ibid., p. 305-7.

at night in the western sea, and his life after death is the renewed splendour of the sun as it rises again in the morning-

"Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
Through the dear might of Him that walketh the waves,
Where, other groves, and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song
In the blest kingdoms meet of joy and love."[1]

Milton's picture pierces through the outward senses to the inward emotions where the concrete forms become symbols for immortality. Figures from nature may be used as mere ornaments of poetry; but those like Milton's not only grace the language , they also become powerful agents to interpret man's deepest emotions and thoughts.

Nature as a Field for the Dramatist

So far in our study we have shown what nature afforded for poetic inspiration. However, Shakespeare being a dramatic poet, it will be of value to observe now the dramatist's point of view regarding nature. Poetic drama involves the union of two arts,- the art of language, and the art of the stage. In England the drama originated in narrative poetry.[2] The miracle and mystery plays of the churches and guilds were dramatizations of striking action such as Cain's slaying his brother, Abel, and Jacob's stealing the blessing from Esau.

1 Holt, Lucius. The Leading English Poets from Chaucer to Browning, p.36.
2 Freytag, Gustav. Technique of the Drama, p.25.

But isolated or loosely connected episodes do not constitute the drama as developed by the Germans and English. A great dramatist so links and arranges his incidents as to reveal the working out of some dominating human passion or emotion and makes them lead gradually to a crisis in the struggles of his characters. The action of a play is not limited to the physical, but includes the mental as well. In a tragedy the real struggle is in the mind of the character. The human and the spiritual elements of his personality are contending against each other for supremacy. Macbeth's ambition overreaches the nobler traits in his character and leads him to commit one bloody deed after another and finally to murder innocent children. The solution in Macbeth is death, as a tragedy usually implies. Though tragic and comic elements are sometimes intermingled in one play, comedy has a lighter theme than tragedy; and its solution often means the removal of outward impeding circumstances which delay the happy ending to follow. Comedy of Errors and Twelfth Night are plays of mistaken identities. Humorous and almost tragic events occur in the first-named of these plays because of confusion arising from the physical resemblances in twins, and in the second play by a girl dressed in man's attire being mistaken for her brother. In time the plot is disentangled in each case and the persons appear in their rightful positions. From the importance of the climax- the center of the action- it is evident that all incidents, speeches, or scenery of use to the plot add to the dramatic unity of the play and any accessory talk or action distracting from the main purpose

lessens the dramatic unity.[1]

If one is working to secure dramatic unity and is at the same time using nature, nature should be a dramatic agent , the means and not the end. As the late Brander Matthews has said, "It must not plead its poetry as an excuse for mere foolishness." [2]

There is, however, opportunity for the lyric use of nature in the words of the actors. Poetic drama is somewhat different from the realistic prose drama of today; for, while it bespeaks what the characters think and how they are affected by outward circumstances, its language is rather ideal and polished. Songs of nature may be introduced into plays. Unlike the English, the Greeks developed their drama from the lyric. Their plays lacked dramatic action, for the lyric can better express emotion than deeds.[3] This poverty of dramatic action in the Greek plays shows how songs, having only poetic worth, may retard the action of a play. Yet, on the other hand, poetic drama is an artistic production and sometimes requires diversions from the main theme. The lyrics between the cantos of The Princess[4] by Tennyson have intrinsic worth in themselves, and they also serve to relieve the tension of the struggle

1 Woodbridge, Elisabeth. The Drama- Its Laws and Technique, p.36-92.
2 Matthews, Brander. Study of the Drama, p.267.
3 Flickinger, Roy. The Greek Theater and Its Drama, p.2.
4 The Princess is a narrative poem which relates a story in verse form. It differs from the drama which not only presents the facts, but makes them more evident than in the epic poem. They are developed to show probability and reason and to aid in motivating the final outcome. See Freytag, Gustav. Technique of the Drama, p. 30-36.

between the Prince and the Princess. The song of the bird for its lost mate in Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking [1] by Whitman interprets the theme of the poem-

> "Soothe! soothe! soothe!
> Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
> And again another behind embracing and lapping,
> But my love soothes not me, not me!" [2]

Not only may the actors sing of nature so as to interpret, retard, or even accelerate the action; but their words regarding nature may disclose their own traits of character or those of others. In Browning's dramatic monologue, The Laboratory,[3] a woman is delving to find poison with which to murder her rival; she stops to admire the deep blue color of the compound and betrays her feminine nature. Sometimes figures from nature, if vivid enough, strengthen impressions already made of characters. Mycetes represents Tamburlaine as a fox preying upon the flocks who are the people whom Tamburlaine ruins-

> "Mycetes- Tamburlaine
> That, like a fox in midst of harvest-time,
> Doth prey upon my flocks of passengers;
> And, as I hear, doth mean to pull my plumes!"[4]

Again actors may draw attention to natural objects in the setting. When stage scenery is inadequate, they may substitute a detailed or a suggestive description as the Elizabethans often did.

While the Elizabethans wrote poetic drama to be acted on the stage, it was not until the middle of the seventeenth

1 See note 4, p. 13.
2 Page, Curtis. The Chief American Poets, p.558.
3 Browning, Robert. Poetic and Dramatic Works, p. 168.
4 Marlowe, Christopher. Works of Christopher Marlowe, p. 10.

century that stage setting had developed enough to satisfy the needs of the drama. The medieval stage employed the multiple set on which the various scenes were painted simultaneously on one background. Court plays and masques usually required no change of setting for their performances. Localization was difficult, however, on both court and theater stages, whenever it was necessary to shift scenes. In the Elizabethan theater there was no curtain between the spectators and the main or outer stage which extended into the pit and was exposed on three sides. These awkward arrangements made it impractical to attempt much localization on the outer stage; for properties, introduced between scenes, were dragged from the rear of the building, often by actors themselves,in full view of the audience. There was, though, an inner stage equipped with a curtain so that localization was possible for indoor, cave scenes, and the like; but its long distance from the spectators interfered with the transmission of the sound of the actors' voices. Directly over the inner stage there was a balcony that might signify a rampart for battle, a mountain to climb, or even a romantic setting for lovers, with little more than a painted placard to designate its change in meaning. Higher than the balcony was the hut whence gods and fairies descended to the main stage.[1]

This meagre stage setting of the Elizabethans is a contrast to the elaborate theater scenery of today. The realists may demand reproduction of the actual scene, though they do not ask for minor details. They use definite objects like trees

1 Thorndyke, Ashley. Shakespeare's Theater, p. 71-94.
See also Lawrence, W. J. The Elizabethan Playhouse, p.1-9.

the rocks, and they are capable of creating a realistic thunder storm with the aid of certain stage devices. Instead of actual, there may be impressionistic background. In Stage Scenery and Setting by Selden and Sellman, there is an illustration of this type of treatment for the orchard scene in Romeo and Juliet -

"Capulet's house was suggested by a plain little balcony placed in a single panel in the center of the stage. The rest of the set consisted merely of soft, dark, neutral draperies and an atmospheric arrangement of lighting."[1]

The same book tells of symbolic scenery used in staging Macbeth. In one presentation of this play, a huge rock enveloped with mist from a low-hanging cloud suggested a place where evil spirits might dwell. In another production three large masks were hung above the stage to remind the audience of the ever-present influence of the three witches.[2] Emotional effects like these increase the unity of a play, if they accord with the dramatic impression of the play as a whole. The three masks would have marred the fairy effect of Midsummer Night's Dream.

Every play is said to have its tone-color or its musical chord.[3] Moods of joy find expression in gay scenes and gloom in sombre colors. There is a sentiment connected with winter woods, and quite a different one with murky London streets. Colors may be symbols. Red is associated with fire, heat, passion, cruelty, bravery, health, beauty, and deception-

"Falsehood clad in scarlet red."[4]

1 Selden & Sellman. Stage Scenery and Setting, p. 205-336.
2 Ibid. loc.cit.
3 Freytag, Gustav. The Technique of the Drama, p.49.
4 Holt, Lucius. The Leading English Poets, p.31.

Amethyst and violet indicate passion of love and truth. White and black are sometimes contrasted: white signifying virtue; and black, wickedness. Black was the color for witchcraft. Through developments in lighting, there is a variety of color effects that may be secured on the stage. By one device, different-colored lights produce varying aspects of the same object. For example, a blue light may disclose merely the trunk of a tree; a red light, its branches; and a green light, its fruit. However, to isolate a color is to call attention to it, and there is an art in the blending of light with dark through shadows for an emotional setting. Through their study of color, the scientist and the artist have made possible the complicated scenic effects of the contemporary theater. But the Elizabethan had only crude stage setting, and he had to rely on the spoken word of the actor to complete the impression of a suitable background.

Method and Purpose of Thesis

In the following chapter we shall give attention to scene-painting among Elizabethan writers and to their other uses of nature. Chapter III sketches the outdoor influences in Shakespeare's environment. Chapter IV contains the main part of the thesis,- nature in the narrative poems and the plays of Shakespeare. There will be grouping to reveal tendencies of Shakespeare; but, for the most part, each work will be studied as a unity in itself. Plays in which nature is of very little importance will be omitted. We do not plan to analyze the passages about nature for the purpose of classification, but rather to show what results Shakespeare accomplished through his interpretation of nature.

II

CHARACTERISTIC WAYS IN WHICH ELIZABETHANS TREATED NATURE

While Shakespeare is generally considered as a writer for all ages, he is also known as the best representative of the Elizabethan Age. Accordingly we have studied the tendencies in the interpretation of nature by the forerunners and contemporaries of Shakespeare in order to realize something of the influence of his own age upon his uses of nature.

The Influence of the Country

Enthusiasm for rural life characterizes the Elizabethans, we are told.[1] In contrast to them, the Classicists loved the city, " dear, distracting London." Gibbon said that when he visited the country it was to see his friends, and not the trees; and Dr. Johnson's dictum was "when a man is tired of London he is tired of life." However much rural life wearied them, these classic imitators of the ancient Greeks and Romans included nature among themes for poetry. Even Pope attempted to write a pastoral. Their difficulty was in making nature conform to the rigid style of the heroic couplet; and, when it did conform, it seemed artificial.[2] Elizabethans, on the other hand, were said to be spontaneous, romantic, and

1 Reynolds, Myra. The Treatment of Nature in English Poetry, p.53.
2 Ibid., p.2-45.

unconventional in dealing with nature.[1] We accept this criticism with the reservation that, while not cramped by a form so stilted as the heroic couplet, the Elizabethans had characteristic and formal modes of writing.

Euphuism

The Elizabethans had a style called Euphuism, a name derived from Euphues which was written by John Lyly(1554-1606), one of Shakespeare's forerunners in the drama. Before it was used by Lyly, the word, Euphues, appeared in Ascham's Schoolmaster where it signified learning and readiness of wit.[2] Lyly applied the same meaning as this to Euphues or The Anatomy of Wit,a book he published in 1579. Euphues was a novel, a type made popular through translations from the Italian.[3] As a story, it means little; the action is slight. Euphues goes to Italy to study. There he falls in love with his friend's sweetheart, Lucilla, who in turn jilts him. She dies, and the friends become reconciled. What notably characterizes the book is excessive moralizing about (1) education and manners, and (2) the heartless cruelty of Lucilla. This is done by means of similes and metaphors drawn from every available source in natural history. Below there is an excerpt showing how overmuch Lyly alluded to nature. Euphues had already gone to Naples. There an old man, noting the ready wit of the youth and wishing to direct it wisely, delivered him a long speech, a part dealing with discipline by parents-

"They might also have taken example of the wise husbandman,

2 Seccombe, Thos. & Allen, J.W. Age of Shakespeare. Vol.1, p.115
3 Schelling, Felix, The English Lyric, p.46.

who in their fattest and most fertill grounde sowe Hempe before Wheate, a grayne that dryeth up the superfluous moysture, and maketh soyle more apte for corne: Or of good Gardeiners who in their curious knottes mix Hisoppe wyth Tyme ayders the one the growth of the other, the one beinge drye, the other moyste: or of cunning Painters who for the whitest woorke caste the blackest grounde, to make the picture more amiable. If therefore thy Father had bene as wise an husbandman, as hee was a fortunate husbande, or thy Mother as good a huswyfe as shee was a happye wyfe, if they had bene bothe as good Gardners to keep their knotte, as they were grafters to brynge foorth such fruite, or as cunninge Painters, as they were happye parentes, no doubt they had sowed Hempe before Wheate, that is discipline before affection, they had set Hisoppe with Time, that is manners wyth witte, the one to aide the other: and to make thy dexteritie more, they had mixed threates with faire lookes." [1]

Critics have censured Lyly for unnatural natural history in some of his figures. According to Saintsbury, Lyly employed "extra-similitudes drawn from all heaven and earth, especially from the fanciful zoology of the Middle Ages." [2] These atrocities in nature may be traced, however, to Lyly's education which was medieval reverting to the mythology and superstitious beliefs of the Greeks and Romans.[3] Virgil's Georgics and Pliny's Natural History were then studied. As authority was rarely questioned at that time in these books, students obtained erroneous information. It was Pliny who asserted that the phoenix lived in Arabia, only one phoenix existed, and that lived 540 years.[4] Science had just commenced, in Lyly's time, to investigate nature. Sullivan said, that, if Elizabethans had known more, their poetry would have been poorer. "They had no wish to probe below their outer films things

1 Lyly,,John. Euphues, p. 187-8.
2 Saintsbury, George. A short History of English Literature, p.298.
3 Shipley, A. Zoology in the Time of Shakespeare. The Edinburgh Review, 216 (1912), p. 117.
4 Ibid., p. 117.

whose dissected anatomies would but kill the poetry which they might weave around such objects."[1] Whether this is a truth or not, in the sixteenth century books available regarding natural history were of a kind to stimulate imagination, as the following reviews show-

Physiologus Theobaldi Episcopi de Naturis Duodecim Animalium was published in 1487. It was not a new book, but a metrical description of animals in the Bible and of monsters of myth. The author who called himself a certain 'Episcopus incertus' did his work in the eleventh century. Nor was the book original; it was a version of Physiologus Bestiarum written in early Christian times at Alexandria and later translated into many languages.

The Speculum Naturale by Vincent Beauvais, a French Dominican, who did research work during the Middle Ages. He cited 350 authors, among them Latin, Greek, and Arabian. As other medieval writers did, Beauvais added his own personality to make his book readable.

A Display on Heraldry by Guillim explained the meanings of animal crests.

Travels by Sir John Mandeville is a compilation from the writings of many travelers. It contains monstrous statements about phenomena in nature; for example, we learn of a valley where devils jump about as thick as grasshoppers.[2]

While nature in Euphues is sometimes fantastical, there is

1 Sullivan E. What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. The Nineteenth Century, 73 (1913) p. 775.

2 Shipley, A. E. Zoology in the Time of Shakespeare. The Edinburgh Review, 216 (1912) p.118-125.

is still another peculiarity about the book. An exacting regular symmetry of form governs the arrangement of the nature figures composing the story: phrase balances phrase, one clause is set over against another, and sentence balances sentence.[1] This exaggerated style became a fad known as Euphuism, which meant affected language for displaying knowledge. It was adopted by the court and by writers who admired Lyly's wit. It continued in popularity until 1590 and then gradually declined in favor.[2] Courthope considered that the metaphorical figure was a natural growth of the Classical Renaissance. In such a case, Lyly, while not the first to employ it, projected the fashion onto the public through Euphues which, as Schweikert said, could be easily imitated.[3]

Besides novels Lyly wrote plays, many like Endymion and The Woman in the Moon, based on mythological stories. The plays are euphuistic; but the figures are more poetic and ornate than those in the novels, as a quotation from Endymion will show, if it is compared with the one from Euphues on pages 18-19. Tellus loves Endymion, but Endymion loves Cynthia, the moon. In disparagement of her pursuit, Endymion says to Tellus-

"Tellus: thou knowest that the stately cedar, whose top reacheth unto the clouds, never boweth his head to the shrubs that grow in the valley: nor ivy, that climbeth up the elm, can never get hold of the beams of the sun."[4]

We do not know how much Euphuism influenced the

1 See quotation, p.19-20 for illustration.

2 Schelling, Felix. English Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare, p. 39.

3 Schweikert, Harry. Early English Plays, p.200.

4 Lyly, John. Endymion, p.27.

Elizabethans; but it had many followers[1] among whom was Robert Greene(1560-1592), a writer of plays and novels. His Menaphon is a pastoral novel written in the manner of Euphues with figures from nature to interpret the action. Here we have again a heartsick lover, this time in Menaphon, who forsakes Pisane, his first love, to woo a princess though in vain. To express her mental state aroused by Menaphon's behaviour, Pisane heaps figure upon figure from nature-

"Pisane sate cursing Cupide as a parciall Deitie that would make more daylight in the Firmament than one Sunne, more rainbowes in the heaven than one Iris, and more loves in one heart than one settled passion."[2]

Figures are not so finely balanced here as in Euphues, but we have daylight, Firmament, and Sunne parallel to rainbowes, heaven, and Iris. The cumulating of images as shown in Menaphon may be found in the writings of some of the greatest Elizabethans including Shakespeare.[3] It was used by lovers in describing the beauty of their ladies-

"Tamburlaine- Zenocrate, lovelier than the love of Jove
Brighter than is the silver Rhodope
Fairer than whitest snow on Scythian hills,
Thy person is more worth to Tamburlaine
Than the possession of the Persian crown."[4]

Christopher Marlowe(1564-1593), who wrote Tamburlaine, used another type of figure from nature. Instead of simply adding one figure to another, he has one lead to another until the comparison is much involved; and, were not the

1 Schelling, Felix. Eng. Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare, p. 40.
2 Greene, Robert. Menaphon, p.50.
3 See Richard II. Act ii, sc.1.
4 Marlowe, Christopher. The Works of Christopher Marlowe, p. 16.

writer so forceful an author as Marlowe, the significance of the imagery would be quite overshadowed by its ornament. Tamburlaine is the story of a Scythian shepherd and his thirst for power. He conquers nation after nation. Agydas, perceiving that he must fall as others had fallen when Tamburlaine had so willed, commences a ranting speech-

> "As when the seaman sees the Hyades
> Gather an army of Cimmerian clouds,
> Auster and Aquilon and winged steeds
> All sweating, tilt about the watery heavens,
> With shivering spears enforcing thunder-claps,
> And from their shields strike flames of lightning,
> All-fearful folds his sails, and sounds the main.
> Lifting his prayers to the heavens for aid
> Against the terror of the winds and waves:
> So fares Agydas for the late-felt frowns
> That send a tempest to my daunted thoughts
> And make my soul divine her overthrow." [1]

The imagery of the involved figures here is overworked and seems inappropriate when voiced by Agydas whose character is little developed. Yet there is in it a splendor unequalled in what we have quoted from Lyly or Greene. Marlowe did not always employ such long comparisons as the two given on pages 23 and 24, but he sometimes presented them in more condensed form to express character; for example, Mycetes' description of Tamburlaine on page 14 and that of Techelles in-

> "As princely lions, when they rouse themselves
> Stretching their paws, and threatening herds of beasts
> So in his armour looketh Tamburlaine." [2]

In tracing Euphuistic influence in Shakespeare, we recall that most of his plays were written after 1590 when Euphuism

1 Marlowe, Christopher. The Works of Christopher Marlowe, p.37.
2 Ibid., p.15.

had passed the zenith of its popularity. Shakespeare used this style of writing as we shall observe in such parallelisms as that of the bees in Henry V.[1] But only occasionally do we find pure Euphuism. As mentioned before, Shakespeare employed the cumulative figure, a modified form of Euphuism.[2] Sometimes his comparisons also become involved; they lose their force in their infinite length.[3] Too, his frequent use of them shows that Shakespeare delighted in similitudes from nature; and the sources of his information regarding nature were as varied as those of Lyly. English scenery and folklore, ancient mythology, and also the phoenix, the basilisk, dragons, and other creatures of fancy are in his writings.[4] What new application he made of the word-painting and comparisons from nature will explain how he improved what he borrowed, as we shall note in our later criticism.

Pastoralism

The Elizabethans were versatile; and, though they might be Euphuists in describing nature, they could be Arcadians as well. We have related that Menaphon was a pastoral;[5] so was Gallathea which Lyly wrote; and Tamburlaine was the Scythian shepherd.[6] Pastoral means description in verse of country life of an imaginary kind, in which the loves of shepherds and shepherdesses play a prominent part. It

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Henry V, Act 1, sc.2; Passionate Pilgrim, V, XI.
2 Cf. p.23.
3 Cf. Richard's first speech in Richard III, Act i, sc.1; Love's Labour's Lost, Act i, sc.1.
4 See 1 Henry IV, Act iii, sc.1.
5 See p. 23 of this thesis.
6 See p.24.

originated in Greece during the primitive, nomadic life of the people it pictured. It was consecrated to Artemis who was worshipped in Arcadia as the goddess of the nymphs, As the Greeks grew more sedentary and cultured, the ceremonies in honor of Artemis became extensive and elaborate; in consequence, the pastoral acquired complexity and alluded freely to the greater divinities as well as the lesser.

Theocritus, living in the third century B.C., wrote the earliest extant pastorals,- poems which reflect the rustic life of the people with their songs and beliefs. He often combined his idyls with dialogue and made them slightly dramatic. After Theocritus' example, pastoral verse continued to be written by Greek and Roman poets. Out of these old Greek and Roman idyls arose pastoral songs of a dramatic kind in all the countries of Europe.

Passing through Italy and France, the pastoral movement was late in reaching England.[1] The Elizabethan Age was one of music and song, and already the lyric had become popular.[2] Song books were being published, and Schelling said that all classes delighted in song.

"Poetry occupied the statesman in the hours of his diversion and lured the scholar from his books; it solaced the prisoner in his cell, and quickened the development of church martyrs. Men courted their mistresses in sonnets, and, if they could not compose them, employed others to write them. A well-turned copy of verses could secure the patronage of some powerful noble and make one's fortune; a flattering song might restore a courtier from disgrace and ruin. Friends addressed one another in rhyme and imitated each other's lyrics."[3]

1 Schelling, Felix. The English Lyric, p.46.
2 Lanier, Sidney. Shakspere and His Forerunners, Vol. II, p.4-6.
3 Schelling, Felix. The English Lyric, p.70.

When the pastoral enters Elizabethan literature, the typical lovers of the early songs become shepherds and shepherdesses. The English hillside is converted into a conventional background for the lovers. Edmund Spenser (1552- 1599), is credited with writing the first important pastoral in the English language.[1] This pastoral, The Shepherd's Calendar, contains twelve eclogues, one for each month. Corydon and Phyllis are anglicized in Colin Clout and Rosalind, and the other characters appear as shepherds. The poem commences in January. Colin complains that Rosalind's love for him is cold like the winter, and he paints the scene in harmony with his own despondency-

> " You naked trees, whose shadie leaves are lost,
> Wherein the birds were wont to build their boure,
> And now are clothed with mosse and hoarie frost,
> In steede of blossomes, wherewith your buds did floure;
> I see your teares that from your boughes do raine,
> Whose drops in drery ysicles remaine."[2]

There are pastoral songs in both the novels and the plays of Elizabethans. Greene's Menaphon quoted before for its Euphuism[3] is a novel based on the usual pastoral theme, the unrequited love of a shepherd. It has many pastoral songs sung by Menaphon and other shepherds in praise of Samela, the princess who is shipwrecked on their shore. Here are verses from one of the songs-

> " Like to Diana in her Summer weede
> Girt with a crimson roabe of brightest die, goes faire Samela,

1 Schelling, Felix. The English Lyric, p. 46.
2 Spenser, Edmund. The Complete Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, p.10.
3 Cf. p. 23 of this thesis.

Whiter than be the flocks that straggling feede,
When washed by Arethusa, faint they lie:
is faire Samela
As faire Aurora in her morning gray
Deckt with the ruddie glister of her love
is faire Samela."[1]

Erskine has stressed music as the basis for the lyric. He said that the first Elizabethan lyrics meant little and that their value was in the accompaniment of music which could directly express the emotion.[2] As the Elizabethans had a taste for music, they would enjoy songs interspersed in the plays and sung to music. Likewise much of the musical talent of the actors could be utilized.[3] Lyly is considered the first to have introduced into plays songs distinctive for their lyric value.[4] George Peele(1558-1597) produced pastoral plays in which there were elaborate outdoor setting, songs, and shepherds and mythological characters. David and Bethsabe and The Arraignment of Paris are both pastoral in spirit. The characters assume the role of shepherds, and the scenes are idealized. In Paris the play opens with a shepherd song in dialogue between Oenone and her lover, Paris-

"Oenone- Fair and fair, and twice so fair
As fair as any may be,
The fairest shepherd on our green,
A love for any lady

"Paris- Fair and fair, and twice so fair,
As fair as any may be, alive,
Thy love is fair for thee alone,
And for no other lady.

"Oenone- My love is fair, my love is gay,
As fresh as bin the flowers in May,
And of my love my roundelay
My merry, merry roundelay."[5]

1 Greene, Robert. Menaphon, p.41.
2 Erskine, John. The Elizabethan Lyric, p.6.
3 Ibid., p. 248 and Schelling, Felix. English Literature during the Life of Shakespeare, p.201.
4 Erskine, John. op.cit.p. 259.
5 Peele, George. The Arraignment of Paris,

Courthope said that Peele had a genius for writing pastoral plays; for this poet loved pageantry and masquerade, and he was a master of whatever was pictorial and external in theatrical art.[1] Shakespeare's plays are not directly pastoral; yet some have shepherds, pastoral songs, and idealized scenery, but modified for his purposes as we shall explain in Chapter IV.

Scene-painting

In the foregoing chapter we stated that the Elizabethan theater was poorly equipped with stage setting for its plays, and that playwrights at times presented their impressions of background in the words of the actors.[2] Both pastoralism and Euphuism encouraged such word-painting; pastoralism with its idealized rural background and songs, and Euphuism with its ornate figures of speech. Peele has sketched an attractive, but fanciful scene in David and Bethsabe-

"May that sweet plaine that beares her pleasant weight
Be still enameld with discoloured flowers;
That precious fount beare sand of purest gold;
And, for the peble, let the silver streames
That pierce earth's bowels to maintaine the sorce
Play upon rubies, saphires, chrisolites;
The brims let be unbrac'd with golden curles
Of mosse that sleepes with sound the waters make
For joy to feed the fount with their recourse;
Let all the grasse that beautifies her bower
Beare manna every morne instead of dew,
Or let the dew be sweeter far than that
That hangs, like chaines of pearle on Hermon hill" 3

1 Courthope, Wm. J. History of English Poetry. Vol. II, p.401.
2 Cf. p.17 of this thesis.
3 Manly, John. Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama, Vol. II, p.423-4.

The imagery in this selection is in accord with the idea that "native woodnotes wild" fits Peele's writings as well as Shakespeare's. But, while the description can be admired for its lyrical qualities, it is overdone for its dramatic value to supplement stage-setting; and the dramatic action is delayed becoming less important than the background. Shakespeare himself has, in certain of his youthful plays, retarded dramatic action by lyrical scene-painting.[1]

Fairy scenes may be found in other Elizabethan plays than Shakespeare's. Drayton's poem, Nymphidia, transports us to Oberon's court where the fairies are excited by the jealousy of the king towards Pigwiggin whom the queen agrees to meet at midnight in a cowslip. She ordes her chariot in which we recognize the skeleton of that in which Queen Mab rides over lovers' noses as they lie asleep as Mercutio sketched it in Romeo and Juliet. It is described by Drayton as-

> " Chariot of a snail's fine shell,
> Which for the colours did excel,
> The fair Queen Mab becoming well,
> So lively was the limning." [2]

Oberon, king of the fairies, appears in Greene's James IV; and with other fairies he dances about a tomb; but, as morning dawns, they all hie away-

> "The rising sun doth call me hence away."[3]

In Endymion the fairies dance about Endymion who is asleep on a lunary bank. They are not attractive in looks, yet

1 Cf. Romeo and Juliet, Act i, sc.4. (Queen Mab speech)
2 Bullein, A. Elizabethans, p. 17.
3 Greene, Robt. The Dramatic Works of Robert Greene, Vol. II, p.96.

graceful in their movements.[1] The fairies sing the pinching song to Endymion, as Shakespeare's fairies sing it about Falstaff in Merry Wives of Windsor.[2] That Shakespeare developed fairy atmosphere and scenes beyond what his forerunners had done will be evident in our treatment of Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest in a subsequent chapter.

1 For reference, see Lyly, John. Endimion, p.72.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iv, sc.4.

III

RURAL INFLUENCES IN SHAKESPEARE'S ENVIRONMENT

We have stated that Elizabethans were fond of the country and that figures and descriptions of nature abound in their works.[1] The sources of these are books like mythology and actual contact with nature of the English countryside.

As a youth, Shakespeare lived in the country and had many rural advantages. Nationalism was growing and idealized all that was English including English scenery. In their patriotism the queen and her retinue made extended trips through England and visited sections remote from city life; and, in so doing, they influenced others to do likewise.[2] The more interest in the mother country increased and the more scientists were rejecting the authority of the classics, direct observation of nature became popular.

Elizabethan Gardens

The Elizabethans enjoyed gardens as well as natural scenery. Their typical gardens intermingled wild and cultivated flowers at times so as to form a color scheme and to draw attention to fragrance.[3] Many of the gardens were walled,[4] while some contained bowers known as 'banks.'[5]

1 Cf. p.18 of this thesis.
2 Clarendon Press. Shakespeare's England. Vol. I, p.1001.
3 Sullivan, E. What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. The Nineteenth Century, 73 (1913), p.783. Also Clarendon Press. op. cit., p. 369-371.
4 Cf. Measure for Measure, Act iv, sc.1.
5 Cf. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act ii, sc.2.

Outdoor Sports

There were various kinds of outdoor sports. Bear-baiting amused those who liked bloody spectacles. Other pastimes were cock-fights, deer-hunting, and falconry. In falconry or hawking, birds of prey are trained to fly after and to capture smaller birds. Harting wrote-

"In Shakespeare's time everyone who could afford it kept a hawk, and the rank of the owner was indicated by the species of bird he carried. To a king belonged the gerfalcon; to a prince the falcon-gentle; to an earl, the peregrine; to a lady the merlin; to a young squire, the hobby; while a yeoman carried a goshawk; a priest, a sparrow-hawk; and a knave or servant, a kestrel." [1]

Shakespeare frequently alluded to hawking and showed that he was familiar with the sport. This intimate knowledge of falconry has an apt illustration in Othello, when Iago through his cunning rouses Othello to jealousy. The latter becomes impassioned as Iago implies that Desdemona is false. In his disregard for her, Othello compares Desdemona to the useless bird which is flown down the wind-

" I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind
To prey at fortune."[2]

Falconers always flew the hawk against the wind whenever they wished her to return; for she would not fly back against the wind.[3]

To denounce Wolsey, the Earl of Surrey referred to a curious custom of capturing larks. Small mirrors and a red cloth scaring the birds would make them crouch until the

1 Von Engeln, O.D. Shakespeare, the Observer of Nature. Review of Reviews, 54 (1916), p.227.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Othello, Act iii, sc.3.
3 Dyer, T.F. Folklore of Shakespeare, p.123.

fowlers could draw nets over them-

> " If we live thus tamely,
> To be thus jaded by a piece of scarlet,
> Farewell, nobility; let his grace go forward,
> And dare us with his cap, like larks."[1]

Such riveting of attention as hawking thus necessitated would tend to make a sportsman observant of nature.

Stratford and the Neighboring Hamlets

Stratford itself had a natural charm, felt in the writings of Shakespeare. On the outer edges of the Avon were bulrushes and yellow water-lilies, and the cowslip grew close by the shore, Bordering the Avon stretched green meadows fringed with willows. Banks with flowers arose from the lowland and furnished a contrast to the unattractive, squalid streets of the town. To the north was the forest of Arden with its aged oaks and elms. Several miles farther away the Cotswold hills stood out, bold in contour; and sheep grazed on their wooded slopes. To the east of the hills a wild, barren area extended; and sunny valleys between the hills produced rich orchard land. From the high land brooks curved in and out through the Warwick country on their way to the Avon.

Leading across fields and over a brook, a meadow path united Stratford to Shottery, a hamlet where Anne Hathaway lived. The Hathaway farmhouse was located high on a bank. There were old-fashioned perennials and orchards on its premises. Sunsets could be watched from a broad meadow at the rear of the house. Other hamlets than Shottery could be

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Henry VIII, Act iii, sc.2.

reached by foot-paths. At Charlcotte, a hamlet to the east , people hunted, fished, and held falconry contests.[1]

Shakespeare's Poetic Interpretation of English Scenery

This sketch of the Stratford country reveals its resources for him who would observe nature and seek its inspiration. That Shakespeare noticed minute objects in nature is manifest from the crimson spots of the tiny cowslip in the fairy's song-

> "Fairy- The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
> In their gold coats spots you see;
> Those be rubies, fairy favors:
> I must go seek some dewdrops here
> To hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear."[2]

Whether Shakespeare discovered for himself the ruby spots or learned of them from another person, he let his imagination play about the ruby spots and interpret his enjoyment of them in the fairy's words. The fine distinctions he saw in nature are illustrated, too, by his delight in the pines-

> " But when from under this terrestrial ball
> He fired the proud tops of the eastern pines."[3]

This is not a scientific treatise on the pine, but rather the product of the poet's esthetic inspiration in the beauty of the tree as it waves its many tops against the sky- and no one of them higher than the rest. Regarding this interpretation by Shakespeare, Ruskin wrote-

1 Von Engeln, O.D. Shakespeare, the Observer of Nature. The Scientific Monthly,2 (1916), 575-6.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act ii, sc.1.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Richard II, Act iii, sc.2.

"You never see the edges of it, so subtle are they; and for this reason it is alone capable of the fiery change which we saw before had been noticed by Shakespeare. When the sun rises behind a ridge crested with pine, provided the ridge be at a distance of about three miles, and seen clear, all the trees for about three or four degrees on each side of the sun become trees of light, seen in clear flame against the darker sky, and dazzling as the sun itself."[1]

That Stratford influenced Shakespeare is clear from his mention of many natural objects existing about him. He shows a keenness of observation as he paints the colors of the sunset, as he makes his lines ring with the music of lark and thrush, and as he shows the changing phenomena; but he is not indebted to ornithologist, astronomer, or botanist for what he saw in nature- those things he recreated with his poet's insight and not with a scientist's detailed account.[2]

Shakespeare's interpretation of nature surrounding him shows how much he felt the "beauty of the green woods, and the mountains, and sky, of the clear streams and the wild creatures that haunted them"[3], especially when we contrast his attitude with that of whom Wordsworth said-

"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."[4]

1 Sullivan, E. What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. Nineteenth Century, 73(1913), p.785.
2 Ibid., p.776.
3 Reynolds, Myra. Treatment of Nature in English Poetry, p. 19.
4 Sullivan, E. What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. Nineteenth Century, 73, p. 779.

IV

INTERPRETATION OF NATURE IN SHAKESPEARE

Up to this chapter we have aimed to provide a background or a basis for what we are to say about nature in Shakespeare. We have made a gradual approach to the main subject through material about the ways in which poets and dramatists, especially Elizabethans, interpreted nature, and about natural influences in Shakespeare's environment. All this prefatory work should help to clarify our remarks concerning Shakespeare, whether it serves for a means of comparison and contrast, or enlightenment of what would otherwise seem obscure. In the study of Shakespeare, it is essential for us to link his uses of nature with human nature, that which was for him of most import. To segregate nature from its place in the poems and plays would not present it in its relation to man, and so it will sometimes be necessary to include data about plot and character inasmuch as nature concerns them. Our research does not penetrate to exact dates when the plays were written; we shall quote approximate dates according to A Shakespeare Handbook by Raymond M. Alden. Its statements may not always be correct, but they are accurate enough for evidence when we are comparing early plays with later ones in order to show tendencies in Shakespeare's treatment of nature during different periods of his life. Our grouping is most significant in the historical plays, since we are not discussing them separately. We shall disclose also some resemblances in the other

plays that are arranged together. The earlier comedies include those written from 1590 to 1601, and the later comedies those written in 1910-11. While the narrative poems, Venus and Adonis and Lucrece are undramatic, they will not be omitted, since they present nature as interpreted in Shakespeare's youth.

Narrative Poems

Venus and Adonis

Venus and Adonis is a classical myth which Shakespeare repainted. There is no moral value in its subject-matter,- the sensual passion of a woman and the cold disdain of a boy. The poem is undramatic, most of it being pure description. The action is narrated, and entangled within the poetry. There is no character-drawing, and mere sensuous beauty is its theme,- the beauty of Venus and the surpassing beauty of Adonis-

> Venus to Adonis-"Thrice fairer than myself
> The field's chief flower, sweet above compare,
> Staine to all Nimphs, more lovely than a man,
> More white, and red, than doves, or roses are."[1]

At times the nature imagery is overworked, and the style becomes languorous as in-

> "When he beheld his shadow in the brooke,
> The fishes spread on it their golden gils,
> When he was by, the birds such pleasure tooke,
> That some would sing, some others in their bills
> Would bring him mulberries and ripe-red cherries
> He fed them with his sight, they him with berries."[2]

Brandes accredited such decorative verses as these to Shakespeare's youth; for, he stated- "In Venus and Adonis glows

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Complete Works, p.485.
2 Ibid., p. 492.

the whole fresh sensuousness of the Renaissance and Shakespeare's youth."[1] Its descriptions are characteristic of the excessive word-painting in which Elizabethans indulged.

What the poem as a whole presents is a succession of beautiful pictures from nature, a panoramic view or background in harmony with the physical beauty of the characters. Without nature for setting and symbolism, the beauty of the characters would have little significance. To exemplify the importance of nature in the poem, there is the lark song which marks the renewal of the chase after Venus troublesome night-

> "" Lo, here the lark, weary of rest,
> From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
> And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
> The sun ariseth in his majesty.
> Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
> That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold." [2]

Shakespeare did not invent the morning song, for it was in common usage at his time;[3] but he recreated it with poetic power and made it a part of the landscape he was painting.

In Venus rural England is made the scene of a boar hunt, even the lark song suggests the native elements; while realistic, the scene grows imaginary, when a lion and a tiger enter, and mythological characters take part in the hunt. Such intermingling of actual with the unreal is Shakespeare's method of securing a romantic background which seems vivid, yet evanescent.

The boar is described so as to accentuate its ugliness, and, thus, by its very contrast, to increase the impression

1 Brandes, George. William Shakespeare, p.56.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Complete Works, p.491.
3 Moorman, F.W. The Interpretation of Nature in English Poetry, p. 208-9.

of the beautiful scenes and people.-

"On his bow-backe he hath a battle-set
Of bristly pikes that ever threat his foes,
His eyes like glow-wormes shine when he doth fret,
His snout digs sepulchers where ere he goes.
Being moved he strikes, whate'er is in his way,
And whom he strikes, his crooked tushes slay.
His brawnie sides with hairie bristles armed-
Are better proofe than thy speares point can enter,
His short thick necke cannot be easily harmed,
Being ireful, on the lion he will venter,
The thornie brambles, and embracing bushes,
As fearful of him part, through whom he rushes."[1]

It is of no wonder that Venus tries to keep Adonis from the chase, if he is to encounter so formidable a beast on whom the thorny brambles make no impression. In urging him to refrain, she says, if he must hunt, why not hunt an animal like the hare. Hereupon she pictures a hare as bayed by hounds, and sympathizes with its fear. While it retards the action, this description has lyric value in portraying the frightened animal and reveals more feeling than any other passage we have quoted from the poem. A few verses will illustrate the breathless speed of the little animal-

"How he outruns the wind, and with what care,
He cranks and crosses with a thousand doubles,
The many musits through the which he goes,
Are like a laberinth to amaze his foes."[2]

The meter itself suggests the swiftness and the lightness of the hare as it runs.

There is, too, Adonis'steed depicted in prosaic language. " Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,"[3] but how full of life he becomes on breaking loose from his rein-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Complete Works, p. 489.
2 Ibid., p. 490.
3 Ibid., p.487.

"Sometimes he scuds far off, and there he stares,
Anon he starts at stirring of a feather;
To bid the wind abase he now prepares,
And wher he run, or fly, they knew not whether."[1]

Marlowe wrote a poem, Hero and Leander, with a theme similar to Venus and Adonis'. Hero is as beautiful as Venus, and Leander as graceful as Adonis. The setting is oriental, not English; and Leander is seen crossing the azure waves and Hero waiting under the stars. Like Venus, Hero and Leander contains beautiful pictures from nature which are merely sensuous.[2] Marlowe's attention to color is as noticeble as Shakespeare's in Venus. The following example shows how that Marlowe's descriptions of nature in his poem appeal to the outward senses particularly that of sight-

"Leander stirr'd, the waves about him wound,
And puld him to the bottome, where the ground
Was strewd with pearle, and in low corrall groves
Sweet singing Meremaids, sported with their loves
On heapes of heavie gold, and took great pleasure
To spurne in carelesse sort the shipwraike treasure
For here the stately azure pallace stood,
Where kingly Neptune and his train abode."[3]

Critics vary in opinion regarding the effect of Venus and Adonis. To Brandes "there is a fire and rapture of color in it all as in the picture of some Italian master of a hundred years before."[4] Hazlitt did not feel this warmth. He compared Venus and also Lucrece to an "ice-house" with its glitter and cold.[5] According to Coleridge, Shakespeare pictured Venus and Adonis as though they were on another planet

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Complete Works. p.487.
2 Jusserand, F.F. A Literary History of the English People. Part II, p.413.
3 Marlowe, Christopher. The Works of Christopher Marlowe, p.508.
4 Brandes, Georg. William Shakespeare, p.56.
5 Stapfer, Paul. Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity, p.132.

where their movements appeared like the twinkling dances of butterflies.[1] And Dowden said, "Shakespeare is intent upon getting down the right colours and lines upon his canvass."[2] Like Peele, Shakespeare was an artist of color. If we regard the poem as a painting and nothing else, we can but admire its colors whether they appear rapturous, cold, or glittering to us. There is a delicacy in some of the pictures. This depends somewhat upon the words and the music of the verse. It is exemplified in the passage where Adonis is transformed into a flower after his death-

> " By this the boy that by her side lay kild,
> Was melted like a vapour from her sight,
> And in his blood that on the ground laie spild
> A purple floure sproong up, checkred with white
> Resembling well his pale cheeks, and the blood,
> Which in round drops, upon their whiteness stood."[3]

Though it is undramatic and unmoral, Venus and Adonis has a value in anticipating the romantic setting of Romeo and Juliet where the passion of the real lovers is felt. It also shows the artist in color and word-painting which were subordinated later to dramatic purposes in plays like Cymbeline.[4]

The Rape of Lucrece

The Rape of Lucrece was published a year after Venus. It is as moral as the earlier poem is unmoral. It is a Latin story told by Ovid and later by Chaucer. In contrast to Venus, it depicts the sensual passion of man and the purity of woman.

1 Stapfer, Paul. Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity, p. 132-3.
2 Ibid., p. 133.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Complete Works, p. 493.
4 See discussion of Cymbeline in this thesis.

Tarquin's fall represents the ruin of kings who rule for their own pleasure and sacrifice the good of their subjects. Even though its material is valuable, this poem is less artistic than Venus and Adonis. There is no nature setting except the darkness, but Shakespeare intensifies this in attempting to create tragic atmosphere. Lucrece frequenty invokes the night to remain as she dreads the day. There is a play on the symbolism of black and white: the one indicating Tarquin's evil; and the other, Lucrece's virtue and beauty. While Shakespeare has associated in Lucrece those things in nature which suggest tragedy and sadness as he did later in Macbeth[1] and Hamlet[2], all but the cry of the weasel frightening Tarquin appear more artificial than the nature imagery in Venus where only physical beauty is considered. Even Philomel's lament seems to be fitted rather than belonging to the poem.

> "By this lamenting Philomel had ended
> The well-tuned warble of her nightly sorrow,
> And solemn night with slow sad gait descended
> To ugly hell: when, lo, the blushing morrow
> Lends light to all fair eyes that light will borrow."[3]

Shakespeare had not yet succeeded in developing character nor in creating tragic atmosphere; for doing so required more depth of insight than harmonizing nature with physical beauty.

1 See p.92-97 of this thesis.
2 See p. 101-102 of this thesis.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Complete Works, p.501.

English Historical Plays (1590-1599) (1612)

The chronicle plays depend less on nature than do the poems or any of the other groups of plays. In them Shakespeare reduced his poetic word-painting and emphasized the epic element, that is, the relating of events. Yet, in these plays, nature is not entirely suppressed.

As we related before[1], Nationalism had stimulated the pride of the English. The French and Spanish had hated the English for their Protestant faith and had caused trouble, but England had defeated them both. Drake had returned from his expedition and had brought with him some of the riches of distant countries, and thus showed Britain how it might expand. Considering these circumstances, it is not surprising that dramatists became popular by writing historical plays of their own country. The English would naturally be eager to see reenacted the patriotic deeds of their forefathers, if patriotic defines them. Marlowe gained success with Edward II[2], and then other playwrights followed his lead; Shakespeare wrote three parts of Henry VI, Richard II, Richard III, King John, Henry V, and two parts of Henry IV. When they are arranged in order of events, these plays cover the period of the War of Roses, or the civil strife of the Lancaster and York families, and also include revolts of nobles and wars with France. Holinshed's Chronicles of England was the source for all these plays excepting King John.

1 See p.32 of this thesis.
2 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p.73-4.

Instead of dramatic productions, the English historical plays are epic accounts of events, Henry VI does little but dramatize the historical material. Richard II and Richard III were written about the same time. In the second of these plays there is much development of plot and also of character. Richard III is very unattractive. He is deformed in personal appearance and a constant plotter of evil. He is characterized by extreme cruelty, much of which he excuses because of his ugly appearance-

> "But I, that am not shap'd for sportive trickes,
> Nor made to court an amorous Looking-glasse:
> I, that am rudely stamped, and want loves Majesty,
> **********
> Cheated of feature by dissembling Nature,
> Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
> Into this breathing world. ****
> **********
> That dogs bark at me as I halt by them."[1]

His withered arm he connects with witchcraft-

> "Look how I am bewitch'd; Behold mine arm
> Is, like a blasted sapling, wither'd up:
> And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch."[2]

The comparison from nature shows the evil influence of witches who were supposed to know how to cause physical affliction and even death to their victims, and so, in this way, Richard excuses his inhumanity. Margaret, whose avenging spirit pervades the play, calls Richard a bottled spider[3] and thus interprets his personality as it appears to her.

In Henry V, Canterbury satirizes the lack of unity in the empire by a euphuistic comparison showing the cooperation of the bees in their work-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Richard III, Act i, sc.1.
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc.4.
3 Ibid., Act v, sc. 3.

"for so work the honey-bees;
Creatures, that, by a rule in nature, teach
The act of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king, and officers of sorts:
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home;
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad;
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds;
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent-royal of their emperor:
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold;
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate;
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering O'er to executors pale
The lazy-yawning drone. I this infer-
That many things, having full reference
To one concent, may work contrariously;
As many arrows, loosed several ways,
Fly to one mark;
As many several ways meet in one town;
As many fresh streams run in one self sea;
As many lines close in the dial's centre;
So may a thousand actions, once afoot,
End in one purpose, and be all well bourne
Without defeat. Therefore, to France, my liege.
Divide your happy England into four;
Whereof take one quarter into France,
And you withal shall make all Gallia shake.
If we, with thrice that power left at home,
Cannot defend our own door from the dog,
Let us be worried; and our nation lose
The name of hardiness, and policy."[1]

The purpose of this comparison with its balanced morals in the style of Lyly is to free the English from their difficulties by means of system in the government. Henry is to lead an army to France to fight, but he dares not leave England unprotected from the Scots; and so, Canterbury suggests that he divide the forces. The simile of the bees resembles Virgil's account of the bees in the Georgics.[2] However,

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Henry V, Act i, sc.2.
2 Virgilius, Maro. Works, p.105-122.

it is likely that here the subject-matter as well as the style is from Euphues and His England. The figure interprets the situation to the audience, but it is too much prolonged and hinders progress of action.

Poets and dramatists paid homage to the queen and expressed their patriotism by eulogizing England.[1] Brooke emphasized his belief that all of Shakespeare's historical plays are based on patriotism. He extended his criticism to Lear where Cordelia is not to rule; for it would mean that her husband, a French noble, become king of Britain.[2] Throughout the plays England is held in high regard. In Richard II, Gaunt bemoans the civil strife in his honored land-

> "This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demi-paradise;
> **********
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> **********
> England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
> Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
> Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame."[3]

At the close of Richard III nature produces a dramatic effect, since it foreshadows the outcome of the battle. The two camps are arranged opposite each other. It is the end of the day, and the sun is setting. But Shakespeare makes the brilliant scene portend victory for Richmond-

> "Richmond- The weary sun hath made a golden set,
> And, by the bright track of his fiery car,
> Gives token of a goodly day to-morrow."[4]

1 Jusserand, F.F. A Literary History of the English People, Vol.II, p.337-40.
2 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p.74.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Richard II, Act ii, sc.1.
4 Shakespeare, Wm. Richard III, Act v, sc.3.

Richmond sleeps, while Richard is visited by the ghosts of those he has caused suffering; and, when morning comes, the day is made to predict ruin to Richard, he being the one to describe the dismal weather-

> "The sun will not be seen to-day;
> The sky doth frown and lour upon our army.
> I would, these dewy teares were from the ground.
> Not shine to-day! Why, what is that to me,
> More than to Richmond? for the self-same heaven,
> That frowns on me, looks sadly upon him."[1]

There is also in Richard II a scene which very definitely interprets for the spectators at the play the meaning of the action. It is localized in the Duke of York's garden. The queen enters with her ladies. Her mood is sorrowful, for she feels the weight of the king's ills. Stepping into the shadows of the trees, they watch the gardener as he directs the men to prune the shrubs and trees.

> "Gardener. Go, bind up yon dangling apricocks,
> Which, like unruly children, make their sire
> Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight:
> Give some supportance to the bending twigs.
> Go, thou, and like an executioner,
> Cut off the heads of too-fast-growing sprays,
> That look too lofty in our commonwealth;
> All must be even in our government-
> You thus employed, I will go root away
> The noisome weeds, that without profit suck
> The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.
>
> "I Serv. Why should we, in the compass of a pale,
> Keep law, and form, and due proportion,
> Showing, as in a model, our firm estate?
> When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,
> Is full of weeds; her fairest flowers chok'd up,
> Her fruit-trees all unprun'd, her hedges ruin'd,
> Her knots disorder'd, and her wholesome herbs
> Swarmed with caterpillars?
>
> "Gard. Hold thy peace-
> He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring,
> Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf:

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Richard III, Act v, sc.3.

The weeds, that his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,
That seem'd in eating him to hold him up,
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolinbroke,
I mean the earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

"1Serv. - What, are they dead?

" Gard.- They are, and Bolinbroke has seized the wasteful king-
Oh!.what pity is it
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land,
As we this garden! We, at time of year,
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees;
Lest, being overproud with sap and blood,
With too much riches it confound itself:
Had he done so to great and growing men,
They might have liv'd to bear and he to taste,
Their fruits of duty, All superfluous branches
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:
Had he done so,himselfe had borne the crown,
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down."[1]

"1 Serv. - What, think you then, the king shall be depos'd?

"Gard.- Depress'd he is already; and depos'd
'Tis doubt, he will be."

And when the queen , thus learning of Richard's fate, reproaches the gardener for his harsh news, he says-

"little joy have I
To breathe this news; yet, what I say is true.
****
I speak no more than everyone doth know."[1]

Although the action implied by the conversation was already completed, the words of the gardener and the servant reinforce what has been presented on the stage; and they also serve as an agent in acquainting the queen of the conditions of the realm. The sea-walled garden is England; the caterpillars are the corruption; the weeds are the favorites; and the trees, the overproud nobles. Corresponding to the pruning and trimming are the training of subjects and

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Richard II, Act iii, sc.4.

and nobles, a task which Richard has neglected.

Milford stated that as much poetry as there is in Richard II would be out of place in Henry V, where the characters are witty and intent on war.[1] However, the chorus had opportunity to display its musical talent in lyrical descriptions of what happens in each act of this play; for this actor sings before all the acts and forewarns the audience of what is to happen. The interpretation is not the bloody reality of events, but their idealized meaning. The function of the chorus was, as he intimates, to stimulate the imagination-

> "And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
> On your imaginary forces work."[2]

Before the third act the chorus tells of the king and his troops as they embark for France-

> " Thus with imagin'd wing our swift scene flies,
> In motion of no less celerity
> Than that of thought. Suppose, that you have seen
> The well-appointed king at Hampton pier
> Embark his royalty; and his brave fleet
> With silken streamers the young Phoebus fanning
> Play with your fancies; and in them behold,
> Upon the hempen tackle, ship-boys climbing:
> Hear the shrill whistle, which doth order give
> To sounds confus'd: behold the threaden sails,
> Borne with the invisible and creeping wind,
> Draw the huge bottoms through the furrow'd sea
> Breasting the lofty surge*****
> *******
> Holding due course to Harfleur."[3]

Prior to the battle in France, the chorus recites again and prepares Shakespeare's theatre-goers for what they are to see happen on the stage-

> " Now entertain conjecture of a time,
> When creeping murmur, and the poring dark,
> Fills the wide vessel of the universe.
> From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,

1 Milford, Humphrey. Shakespeare and the Theater, p.47.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Henry V, Chorus to Act i.
3 Ibid., Chorus to Act iii,

The hum of either army stilly sounds
That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch:
Fire answers fire; and through their paly flames
Each battle sees the other's umber'd face:
Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs
Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents
The armourers*******
Give dreadful note of preparation.
The country cocks do crow, the clocks do toll,
And the third hour of drowsy morning name.
The confident and over-lusty French
Do the low-rated English play at dice;
And chide the cripple tardy-gaited night,
Who, like a foul and ugly witch, doth limp
So tediously away. The poor condemn'd English
Sit patiently, and inly ruminate
The morning's danger;"[1]

The audience were not to see exactly what the chorus pictured, yet the chorus clarified many incidents. Not all the happenings were presented on the Elizabethan stage, nor was the setting adequate on all occasions. And thus the chorus, with much of its imagery from nature, reenforced the action of the play to make it comprehensible to those who did not know English history, and also atoned for awkwardness in stage scenery.

Henry VIII[2] was written in 1612, much later than the dates of the other historical plays. It is somewhat different from the earlier plays, for its events did not occur many years before Shakespeare was born. Henry is unjustly despotic to Katherine whom he dequeens that he may marry Anne Boleyn. The grief of the queen is evident as she sits at work with her ladies. To dispel her sorrow, they sing of Orpheus and his music that could hold nature entranced-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Henry V. Chorus to Act IV.
2 There is doubt regarding how much of Henry VIII was written by Shakespeare.

"Orpheus and his lute made trees
And the mountain-tops that freeze
Bow themselves, when he did sing
To his music, plants, and flowers,
Ever sprung; as sun, and showers,
There had been a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art;
Killing care, and grief of heart,
Fall asleep, or, hearing, die."[1]

The ladies sing the song immediately before Wolsey comes to harass the gentle queen in his urging her to bend to Henry's will, and to her spirit it is like a calm before a storm.

Besides Katherine's loss of royal favor, there is another dramatic event of importance in the play. Wolsey has played the tyrant with his power. But he, too, falls; and, when he does, he stops to philosophize about life-

"So fare well to the little good you bear me
Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness!
This is the state of man; To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him:
The third day, comes a frost, a killing frost;
And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening,- nips his root,
And then he falls as I do."[2]

Here there is a greater force to the figures representing the stages in man's rise and fall than what we observed in the euphuistic parallel from the bees in Henry V; and, in this respect, it shows the development of Shakespeare's power to make his figures express dramatic as well as lyrical value.

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Henry VIII, Act iii, sc.1.
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc.2.

Earlier Romantic Comedies

Love's Labour's Lost

Love's Labour's Lost is the first of Shakespeare's comedies which has outdoor setting to accord with its romantic- or we may say, in this play, sentimental- tone. Milford termed the play "a motionless pastoral without stage action."[1] It is for the most part a play on words. The scenes occur in a park where we first meet the King of Navarre and the lords, Biron, Longaville, and Dumain, who take an oath that they will spend three years in devotion to study and that they will speak to no woman during that time. We are constantly reminded of the natural setting. The Princess comes with a message from her father in France. As she and her ladies, Rosaline, Maria, and Katherine enter, the Princess draws attention to a hill in the distance-

> " Was that the king, that spurr'd his horse so hard
> Against the steep uprising of the hill?" [2]

And Biron speaks of the deer in the park, at the same time making a play on the word, deer.

> "The king is hunting the deer."[3]

It happens that all the men become in love with the various ladies to whom they write lyrics according to the custom of Elizabethan suitors, As each lord wishes to conceal from the others his love, humorous situations occur. Seeing the king approach him, Biron climbs a tree and overhears the lord of Navarre read his poem which commences-

1 Milford, Humphrey. Shakespeare and the Theatre, p.41.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Love's Labour's Lost, Act iv, sc.1.
3 Ibid., Act iv, sc.3.

"So sweet a kiss the sun gives not
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose,
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows."[1]

In this sonnet of the king's, the nature figures are decorative and literary and involved,- one simile instigating another. The other men read their lyrics, Dumain's seeming most spontaneous-

"On a day(alack the day)
Love, whose month was ever May,
Spied a blossom, passing fair,
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alack, my hand is sworn,
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn
****
Do not call it sin in me,
That I am forsworn for thee."[2]

Before Shakespeare, Breton wrote a similar song to this.[3] However, Dumain's verses are not a copy of Breton's, but re-created by Shakespeare's poetic inspiration.

Thorndyke thought that the play was written to meet the taste for refined and witty comedy Lyly had fostered, and that the whole was a fantasy of word-play.[4] We also observe that this comedy is more lyrical than dramatic, and depends on words rather than on action. The song at the end bespeaks Shakespeare's power over words and music. It is in dialogue between Vers and Hiems, and resembles the pastoral in which two shepherds sing, one in answer to the other. The lark,

1 Shakespeare, Wm., Love's Labour's Lost, Act iv, sc. 3.
2 Ibid., loc. cit.
3 Erskine, John. The Elizabethan Lyric, p.268.
4 Thorndyke, Ashley. English Comedy, p.95-7.

the icicles, the frozen milk, and other images are English; but the shepherds associated with love-making romanticize the realistic song, and the lyric supplies a fitting close for the comedy which treats lightly the woes of lovers.

"Spring
When daisies pied, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo,- O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer frocks,
Refrain *****

Winter- When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
Tu-whit, towho, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marion's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Refrain ******" [1]

Shakespeare, Wm. Love's Labour's Lost, Act v, sc.2.

Two Gentlemen of Verona (1591-2)

Like the preceding play, Two Gentlemen of Verona contains euphuistic play of words; it has also a sentimentality of the type we noticed in Greene's Menaphon.[1] Thorndyke said it was close to the stock plot of romantic comedy with love at first sight. He called it the bare formula of a romance,[2] In this play, however, there is a romantic element not existing in Love's Labour's Lost. Valentine's banishment to the woods is reminiscent of the Robin Hood legends and their romantic associations with Sherwood forest. While he is living in exile, Proteus, supposed to be his friend, proves false by trying to aid Thurio in winning Silvia's love. He advises Thurio to court his lady with songs; and, like the ladies in Henry VIII, he shows how much power the music of Orpheus' lute had over nature-

"You must lay lime, to tangle her desires,
By wailful sonnets whose composed rhymes
Should be full fraught with serviceable vows.

"Duke- Ay, much the force of heaven-bred poesy.

"Pro.- and frame some feeling line,
****
For Orpheus' lute was strung with poet's sinews;
Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,
Make Tigers tame, and huge leviathans
Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands.
After your dire-lamenting elegies,
Visit by night your lady's chamber-window
With some sweet concert:" [3]

The description of Orpheus' music is less graceful than that in Henry VIII.[4] Nevertheless , the coarseness of its exaggerated statements harmonizes with the characters of

1 See p.23 of this thesis.
2 Thorndyke, Ashley. English Comedy, p.98-9.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act iii, sc. 2
4 Cf. song, p.52.

Proteus and Thurio, while the soft music sung by the ladies but idealizes the power of Orpheus and suggests the gentle queen.

Valentine sits musing on the consolation he receives from nature in his banishment-

> "This shadowy forest, unfrequented woods,
> I better brook than flourishing peopled towns:
> Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
> And to the nightingale's complaining notes,
> Tune my distresses, and record my woes."[1]

Then Proteus, Thurio, and Julia enter. And, in the shadows of the forest, all the difficulties slip away: Valentine and Silvia are reunited in love, and so are Proteus and Julia. Weak as are some of the characters in Two Gentlemen of Verona, the play has a romantic background of woodland such as Shakespeare later fashioned in the Forest of Arden.

Midsummer Night's Dream (1593-5)

Midsummer Night's Dream has been called the most beautiful expression of Shakespeare's early work.[2] It was planned for presentation at court to celebrate a special occasion, possibly a wedding. For a purpose like this, a comedy would be expected to have scenic display, dancing, and song.[3] The primary interest is not in the story or characters, but in the various entertainments for the court. Like Hamlet, it has a mock show and a mock audience. In the play are several interlinking stories,- the celebration for the wedding of Theseus and Hyppolyta, the quarrels of the fairies, the mortals and their love-making, and the clownish actors playing

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act v, sc. 4.
2 Griggs, Edward Howard. Syllabus of Twelve Lectures, p.7.
3 Thorndyke, Ashley. English Comedy, p.101.

Pyramus and Thisbe. In Griggs' estimation, it is not the characters with their love affairs, nor the royal wedding, but fairyland about which action centers.[1] We mentioned in Chapter II that Elizabethans had fairy scenes in their plays. Lyly introduced fairies in Endymion and Greene in James IV.[2] In Shakespeare the moonlight bank of Endymion and the night in James IV are transfigured into a sprightly fairyland such as Lyly and Greene did not succeed in picturing. Though the action happens near Athens, the fairies are Celtic rather than classic. Elizabeth Latimer interpreted the fairies as follows- Wherever the Celts settled, they made or found the earth peopled with elves, fairies, and nixies. The elves or gnomes lived under the earth; fairies above ground; and nixies in water. Translated by legends of saints, when mischievous the fairies became devils, and when beneficent they became angels. Pucks, follets, and brownies of domestic life generally haunted houses of country people, whence neither holy water nor exorcism could expel them. They were invisible, but made known their presence by throwing about wood and stone, and even pots and kettles. Our devil developed from them his horns, hoofs, and tail.[3] Another view of fairies is that they originated in those people who had been banished from life in towns. Their forms shrunken from lack of food would compare with the diminutive size of fairies. Towards dusk these little people might be seen skipping over hills

1 Griggs, Edward Howard. Lecture, As You Like It.
2 See p. 30-31 of this thesis.
3 Latimer, Elizabeth. Shakespeare's Comedies, p. 91-4.

and near woods to obtain food; and we learn of the pranks they played on their enemies as well as the kindnesses they showed to their friends.[1] This theory agrees with the size of fairies , but is less poetic than Miss Latimer's story.

Shakespeare borrowed very small boys from another company than his to play the parts of the fairies.[2] In doing this, he had opportunity to contrast the stature of the fairies with that of mortals.

The play opens in daylight with Theseus and Hyppolyta preparing to celebrate their nuptials, and their thoughts are of a moonlit night-

> " Four days will quickly steep themselves in nights;
> Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
> And then the moon, like to a silver bow
> New bent in heaven, shall behold the night
> Of our solemnities."[3]

The mortals enter, and Hermia quarrels with her father, Egeus. Plans for elopement follow, and the lovers fancy a midsummer's night in the woods-

> "Lysander- To-morrow night when Phebe doth behold
> Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass
> (A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,)
> Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.
>
> "Hermia- And in the wood, where often you and I
> Upon faint primrose beds were wont to lie
> **********
> There my Lysander and myself shall meet."[4]

In Act II the shadows have lengthened, and the moonlight night has come, a time for revelry. Puck and a fairy enter from opposite ways. The fairy sings of cowslips and dew-drops,- the tiny things in nature-, and Puck answers her

1 Wendell, Barrett. William Shakespeare, p.114.
2 Thorndike, Ashley. English Comedy, p.103.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act i, sc.1.
4 Ibid., loc.cit.

painting all nature in sprightly vein-

> " And now they never meet in grove, or green,
> By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,
> But they do square; that all their elves, for fear,
> Creep into acorn-cups, and hide them there."[1]

He is referring in what he says to the fairy king and queen who have quarrelled. There is a delicate fancy in the picture of the elves creeping into acorn-cups; and the atmosphere of nature harmonizing in form and spirit with the fairies begins here and is constant throughout the play. In their elfish wrangles the fairies seem to be a part of nature and become the cause of nature in topsy-turvy aspect.-

> "And through this distemperature, we see
> The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
> Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
> And on old Hyem's chin, and icy crown,
> An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
> Is, as in mockery, set: The spring, the summer,
> The childing autumn, the angry winter, change
> Their wonted liveries; and the 'mazed world,
> By their increase, now knows not which is which:
> And this same progeny of evil comes
> From our debate, from our dissension;
> We are their parents and original."[2]

To deepen the impression of fairy atmosphere, Shakespeare uses a fairy charm. Oberon sends Puck to go and bring the flower with which a prank is to be played on Titania. How the flower gained its magic power is exquisitely related- a fairy story itself-

> "Oberon to Titania- Thou shalt not from this grove,
> Till I torment thee for this injury-
> My gentle Puck, come hither: Thou remember'st
> Since once I sat upon a promontory,
> And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
> Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
> That the rude sea grew civil at her song;

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act ii, sc. 1.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc. 2.

And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the mermaids song.

" Puck- I remember.

" Obe. - That very time I saw (but thou couldst not)
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal, throned by the west;
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from the bow,
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon;
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell.
It fell upon a little western flower,-
Before, milk-white; now purple with love's wound,-
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'd thee once
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb: and be thou here again,
Ere the leviathan can swim a league."[1]

The dolphin and the mermaid may have had its origin in the festivities at Kenilworth for Queen Elizabeth.[2] Shakespeare may have seen a float representing fanciful pictures from nature and reimaged it to accord to accord with fairyland.

In Puck's reply to Oberon, he shows the fairies circling the earth with lightning speed-

"I'll put a girdle round the earth
In forty minutes."[1]

They take us to India and back and introduce the Indian boy who causes the jealous dispute of the elves.

As soon as Puck returns with the charm, Oberon seeks Titania on her couch of flowers and pictures her asleep there-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act ii, sc. 2.

2 Brandes, Georg. William Shakespeare, p.66.

"I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;" [1]

Luce criticised the bank for its wild and cultivated flowers growing together,- the violet with the roses.[2] But he was a botanist seeking accuracy of detail; and, caring not for ideal nature, he missed the daintiness of Titania's coverlet-

"And there the snake wraps her enamell'd skin
Weed-wide enough to wrap a fairy in." [3]

The fairies sing a lullaby for their queen from whom they would keep all the harmful things in the fairy world-

"I Fairy- You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
Thorny hedge-hogs be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen:
Chorus- Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla,lulla, lullaby; lulla, lullaby, lullaby:
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, goodnight, with lullaby.

"2 Fairy- Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence." [4]

Here as at many other times Shakespeare's fairies are not the ugly sprites of folklore or repulsive as we have seen in Endymion,[5] but transfigured into agents of good.

The fairies are at home in the forest where they roam

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act ii, sc.2.
2 Luce, Morton. Botany in Shakespeare. The Nineteenth Century, Vol. 98 (1925), p. 592-7.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. loc. cit.
4 Ibid., Act ii, sc. 3.
5 See p. 30 of this thesis.

at will and confuse the mortals. Puck places the love-juice on the wrong lover's eyes and makes him reverse his love. The fairies do not tire, but Hermia says-

"Never so weary, never so in wo,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers
I can no further crawl, no further go;"[1]

And Bottom sings to keep from being afraid-

"The ousel-cock, so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true
The wren with little quill."[2]

The noise of his singing wakes the queen who has had the love-charm applied to her eyes, and straightway she fixes her love on Bottom wearing an ass's head.

Here a grotesqueness is added such as occurs in dreams. The dainty fairies, Peas-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed are made to wait on the coarse Bottom. When Titania addresses them, her thoughts of nature and her language are fairylike-

"Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dew-berries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the honey-bees,
And, for night-tapers, crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies."[3]

But Bottom's humor is of a rollicking kind; and he burlesques the fairies, as he thinks how ridiculous Cobweb would look should the honey be spilled and cover the elf-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act iii, sc.2.
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc.1.
3 Ibid., Act iii, sc.1.

" Bot.- Monsieur Cobweb: good monsieur,get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humblebee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag.
****
And, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loath to have you overflown with a honey-bag."[1]

Bottom speaks in prose, while the language of the fairies is sprightly in its music.

Oberon releases the queen from the spell of the flower by placing its juice once more on her eyelids; and, when she awakes again, it is Oberon she first sees and loves; and she thinks that Bottom was in a dream-

"What visions have I seen?" [2]

Puck remedies his mistake in applying the love-juice to the mortals' eyes; then morning approaches, as his words about the lark tell us-

" Puck- Fairy king, attend and mark;
I do hear the morning lark.

" Oberon- Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade:
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wand'ring moon."[3]

The dream passes. The mortals wake, their loves righted by the fairy charm; and the fairies agree to dance at Theseus' wedding to-morrow midnight, The scene becomes real. Theseus and Hippolyta are by a wood, and he interprets all the revelry Shakespeare imputed to the fairies as the music of his hounds. His description of the hounds calls to mind that of Adonis' steed in Venus and Adonis, but it is more imaginative than the enumeration of physical parts given in the

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act iv, sc.1.
2 Ibid., loc.cit.
3 Ibid., loc.cit.

earlier work.[1]

" My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
But soft; what nymphs are these?"[2]

Last is the entertainment at Theseus' court by the players. When all is over at twelve, the fairies appear again and guard the house until morning-

"Obe.- Through this house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire:
Every elf and fairy sprite,
Hop as light as bird from brier."[3]

At daybreak they all hie away, Puck singing that what had happened was but a dream of a midsummer night-

"If we shadows have offended,
Think but this (and all is mended)
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend;
****
So, goodnight unto you all,
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends." [4]

Midsummer Night's Dream is Shakespeare's interpretation of the twilight shadows, the moonbeans, and the sounds of nature in the night. The fairy picture is not represented with details; but suggestions, like the elves in acorn-cups, and primrose banks, are sufficient to stimulate one to picture his own fairyland. While much of the nature mentioned by

1 See p.40 of this thesis.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Midsummer Night's Dream, Act iv, sc.1.
3 Ibid., Act v, sc.2.
4 Ibid., Act v, sc.2.

the actors could not be represented in a satisfactory manner with Elizabethan stage-setting, the impression of the scene, as the fairies give it , can not be equalled in modern theater scenery; for it is inwoven with the music and fancy of their songs.

Merchant of Venice (1594-6)

The Merchant of Venice is a tragi-comedy; for, in one of its plots, the death of a leading character is planned, and, when the catastrophe is averted, the romantic plot appears the essential one. The source of the story is Italian; and all three of its plots,- the pound of flesh, the caskets, and the rings, are improbable. Shakespeare did not invent the story, but his art was the welding of the different plots so as to give an illusion of plausibility. Scenes helped him to accomplish this. He continually shifted the center of action from Venice to Belmont and back again. In this play Venice is not the Venice of gondolas and music. Instead, it is a business center with ships sailing in and out of its port. At Belmont the atmosphere is changed, and unreality replaces the life in the city. Sir Arthur Quiller- Couch thought of Belmont as the hill beautiful;[1] and Brooke, as a good picture of stately country-houses where rich Venetians lived during the Middle Ages.[2] This romantic background would blend with the stories and conceal their incongruities.

When Bassanio finds Portia's picture in the casket he has

1 Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur. Shakespeare's Workmanship, p.82.

2 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p.137.

happily chosen, he is more romantic than virtuous; and he dreams about her-

> "Here in her hairs
> The painter plays the spider; and hath woven
> A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men,
> Faster than gnats in cobwebs."[1]

In the idyllic atmosphere of Belmont everyone is improved whether by its influence or that of Portia who says-

> " How far that little candle throws his beams,
> So shines a good deed in a naughty world." [2]

Quiller-Couch argues that these lines indicate the power she exerted over her associates.[3] Whether it is due to her or Belmont, Arragon and Morocco become reflective and accept their fate without complaint. Bassanio, a spendthrift, appears to choose wisely whether chance may have been favorable to him. And Portia, while keen in discernment, could better have employed her lyric judgment

> " The quality of mercy is not strained
> But falleth as the gentle rain from heaven."[4]

in dreamy Belmont than to Shylock for whom it did not apply, when she demanded that he forfeit half his goods to the state, the other half to the man who is to marry his daughter, and that he become a Christian himself. Finally Lorenzo and Jessica, whom Brooke called the butterflies flitting in and out of the scenes of the play[5], go to Belmont where they are deeply imaginative as they enjoy the moonlight night.

The last act may be called an anti-climax to the court

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Merchant of Venice, Act iii, sc.2.
2 Ibid., Act v, sc.i.
3 Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur. Shakespeare's Workmanship, p. 92.
4 Shakespeare, Wm. Op.cit. Act IV, sc. 1.
5 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p. 149.

trial; it is entirely romantic, and harmonizes nature with the love of those at Belmont. It is expressed in the words of Lorenzo and Jessica rather than in those of Bassanio and Portia, the leading characters-

" Lor.- The moon shines bright :- In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise; in such a night,
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

" Jes. In such a night,
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew;
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay'd away.

"Lor. In such a night,
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea-banks, and wav'd her love
To come again to Carthage.

"Jes. In such a night,
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Aeson .

" Lor. In such a night,
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew:
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,
As far as Belmont.

" Jes. And in such a night,
Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well;
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

"Lor. And in such a night,
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave her.

"Jes. I would outnight you, did nobody ..
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man."

Instead of entering Portia's house on reaching Belmont, these two lovers remain outside to await her arrival. To them the beauty of the night is blended with delightful music-

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night,
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica: Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thich inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb, which thou behold'st,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins:
Such harmony is in mortal souls." [1]

This romantic setting shows even more imagination than the love scene in Romeo and Juliet where the lovers paint in words the beauty of the scene; for here the night is united with other romantic nights in history, and their words show contemplation as they fancy the harmony of the spheres, and appreciation of the moonlight sleeping on the bank, and the fancy of the sweet winds kissing the trees. To them the night is in harmony with their own emotions.

Much Ado About Nothing (1599)

Much Ado About Nothing is a play of words like Love's Labour's Lost. Its contests of wit are more piquant than those in the earlier play, perhaps because they come from the lips of Benedick and Beatrice, two brilliant characters invented by Shakespeare, and because of Shakespeare's development in technique to express them. Beatrice and Benedick love each other, but Beatrice chooses to conceal her feeling. The raillery is that of keen wits, always ready with an answer; but it is refined. Benedick proves equal to Beatrice in bandying, no matter how pointed her thrusts. Like other plays of wit, the characters talk often in figures of nature-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Merchant of Venice, Act v, sc.1.

"Beat. - I wonder that you will still be talking, Senior Benedick; nobody marks you.

"Bene.- What, my dear lady Disdain! Are you yet living?

** ****** ***** *******

"Beat.- I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

*** ******************

"Bene.- Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

"Beat.- A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

"" .

" Bene. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue: and so good a continuer:"[1]

The scene is an Italian garden which could be as romantic as a forest; however, Shakespeare develops it little, while he stresses banter of words. Once it is localized with a definite purpose. Hero, knowing that Beatrice has ridiculed Benedick too much, wishes Beatrice to curb her witty remarks and also to recognize that Benedick continues to love her. Margaret entices Beatrice to enter a bower,- it was the duke in Twelfth Night who said, " Love thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers." [2] There she is to listen to what Hero and Ursula say of her.

" Hero- Good Margaret, run thee into the parlour:
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the prince and Claudio:
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say, that thou'st overheard us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honeysuckles ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter;- like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it:- there will she hide her
To listen our purpose: this is thy office."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Much Ado About Nothing, Act iii, sc.1,
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Twelfth Night, Act i, sc.2.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Much Ado About Nothing, Act iii, sc.1.

Hero's lyrical speeches of nature make her seem more gentle than Beatrice who uses nature for satire; nevertheless, Hero understands her cousin and succeeds in bringing her outdoor to hear what is said. Beatrice' action is reenforced with figures from falconry. As Beatrice comes trying to keep from Hero's sight, Hero's words give the spectators significance to the action-

> "Hero- Look; where Beatrice, like a lapwing runs
> Close by the ground to hear our conference."[1]

Ursula replies with a figure from sporting, and strengthens the dramatic situation in which Hero and Ursula are watching closely the effect of their conversation on Beatrice-

> "Urs.- The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
> Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
> And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
> So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
> Is couched in the woodbine coverture:
> Fear you not my part of the dialogue." [2]

Perceiving that Beatrice is being influenced by their words, Ursula reveals this fact by comparing Beatrice with the bird that is limed or snared-

> "Urs.- She's lim'd, I warrant you; we have caught her, madam."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Much Ado About Nothing, Act iii, sc, 1.
2 Ibid., loc. cit.
3 Ibid., loc. cit.

As You Like It (1599-1600)

As You Like It is another Italian story. Shakespeare follows the plot as told by Thomas Lodge in the novel, Rosalind.[1] It is also affected by the Robin Hood plays acted in London about 1600. The Sherwood scenes correspond to Shakespeare's Arden. Thorndyke referred to As You Like It as "the idyllic charm of free life far from court."[2] The play begins not in the forest, but in an Italian orchard. We learn at once through Charles, the wrestler, of the Duke's banishment by his usurping brother. Three or four other lords, too, have gone into voluntary exile with him-

"Oliver- Where will the old duke live?

"Charles- They say, he is already in the forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England: they say, many young gentlemen flock to him every day; and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world."[3]

The wrestler's words characterize the attitude throughout the play,- that Arden Forest is a place to fleet the time carelessly. Griggs considered As You Like It the relief in nature;[4] and Quiller- Couch stressed the change in the characters as soon as they went to live in the forest.[5] Rosalind is banished for no better reason than being her father's daughter. Celia, her cousin and daughter of Duke Frederick, goes with her to the woods. In approaching Arden, they are weary like Hermia in Midsummer Night's Dream.

1 Alden, Raymond. A Shakespeare Handbook, p.77-82.
2 Thorndyke Ashley. English Comedy, p.112.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. As You Like It, Act i, sc.1.
4 Griggs, Edward Howard. A Syllabus of Twelve Lectures, p.12.
5 Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur. Notes on Shakespeare's Workmanship, p.100-2.

"Ros.- O! Jupiter! How weary are my spirits!"

"Touchstone-I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary!"

"Celia- I pray you, bear with me; I cannot go further."[1]

But when arrived, Rosalind says-

"Well, this is Arden, the forest of Arden."[2]

These words make clear the location to the spectators, and also show the change in her mood. Now she is buoyant, the spirit of all her companions; and, like the duke, she fleets the time carelessly. The forest background is as ideal as her character, and is better suited than superficial court life to enhance her qualities. Griggs believed that fairy-land was the center of interest in Midsummer Night's Dream, but Rosalind rather than Arden in As You Like It, for she is the leading spirit of all the refugees.[3] The forest appears made for Rosalind instead of Rosalind for the forest, and we think of her before we do of the setting. Touchstone recovers his wit as a jester, when he commences outdoor life in Arden.

The setting has a pastoral air; Rosalind and Celia meet shepherds of whom they buy a farm and sheepcote in the midst of the forest. Shakespeare does not employ them directly in a pastoral. They were included in the original story, Rosalinde. Their complaints appear like Menaphon's, only of less importance. They are anglicized in name, and they work rather than pipe on straws under trees. Shepherds' costumes were elaborate, and the appearance of these characters would romanticize the scene by their associations with Arcadian

1 Shakespeare, Wm. As You Like It, Act ii, sc.4.
2 Ibid., loc.cit.
3 Griggs, Edward Howard. Lectures, As You Like It.

scenes and love-making. Their love is superficial and contrasts with that of Orlando and Rosalind.

Delightful nature songs are a part of the play. To show the gay spirit of the dwellers in Arden, Amiens sings-

"Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall we see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather."[1]

Besides increasing the emotional effect of the play, the idyl serves to enter Amiens on the stage, and it hints that the season is winter; and, thereby, the forest has both realistic and romantic elements, the idea of the time of year making the impression of Arden vivid, and the imaginative part of the song being romantic. Jacques alone is cynical. He asks Amiens to sing again, but Amiens fears that his singing will make Jacques melancholy. However, he does sing and in praise of fleeting the time carelessly. Jacques is dejected. He either thinks or pretends to think that having so good a time in the forest is artificial, and he sings his ducdame song to show disgust at so many people assembled to enjoy the tedious woods-

"Ami.- What's that ducdame?

"Jacq.- 'Tis a Greek invocation, to call fools in a circle."[2]

Orlando seeks Arden as he flees from his brother, Oliver, who wishes to kill him. He is more in earnest than the other

1 Shakespeare, Wm. As You Like It, Act ii, sc.5.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc.5.

characters; in the first place, his aged servant, Adam, needs to be resuscitated after the tiring journey-

"Adam- Dear master, I can go no further: o, I die for food."[1]

Orlando sees the duke and his attendants eating and demands their food for Adam. The repast is gladly shared with the newly arrived exiles, who, like the others are changed in spirit. Then Amiens sings lightheartedly of the weather as before-

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh, ho! sing, heigh, ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh, ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh,
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not."[2]

Amiens' song makes life in Arden appear like a jolly game, and it is a game that most of them play. Orlando is serious as he hangs his sentimental verses on the tree , while it is a moonlight night-

"Hang there, my verse, in witness of my love;
And, thou, thrice-crown'd queen of night, survey
With thy chaste eye, from thy pale sphere above,
Thy huntress' name, that my full love doth sway.
Rosalind! these trees shall be my books,
And in their barks my thoughts I'll character;
That every eye, which in this forest looks,
Shall see thy virtue witness'd everywhere."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. As You Like It, Act ii, sc.6.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc.7.
3 Ibid., Act iii, sc.2.

Rosalind takes advantage of his gravity and plays with him, and she shows herself the equal to Beatrice in sustaining a role. She is as yet dressed like a boy; and, though not so sharply as Beatrice does with Benedick, she tantalizes Orlando. In turn Touchstone rallies her about Orlando's sonnets and parodies them-

> "If a hart do lack a hind,
> Let him seek out Rosalind.
> If the cat will after kind,
> So, be sure, will Rosalind.
> Winter garments must be lin'd,
> So must slender Rosalind.
> They that reap, must sheaf and bind;
> Then to cart with Rosalind,
> Sweetest nut hath sourest rind,
> Such a nut is Rosalind.
> He that sweetest rose will find,
> Must find love's prick, and Rosalind."[1]

Then Oliver comes to Arden; and, being rescued from a snake and a lion in the winter snows of Arden, he is transformed and wins Celia's love though against Rosalind's wishes, for Rosalind does not overlook his meanness to Orlando earlier in the play. Like the others, Duke Frederick reaches the forest. He comes intent on killing his brother; but, under the spell of Arden, he reforms, restores the title to the banished duke, and makes the forest his abode.

The holiday in the woods then ends for the courtiers, who, excepting Frederick, hie back to their accustomed surroundings before they have time to weary of perpetual nature; and they show, according to Griggs, that they have been making the best of their exile[2] and that "Sweet are the uses

1 Shakespeare, Wm. As You Like It, Act iii, sc.2.
2 Griggs, Edward Howard. Lecture, As You Like It.

of adversity "[1] When all have left the woods, the whole play seems fleeting like a dream. Though Shakespeare sketched the outlines of the background with the trees, the forest, the moonlight, the sheepcotes, the winter, he did not clutter it with enumeration of details. It is realistic enough for the audience to grasp, and then romanticized with Oliver's lion and the green and gilded snake and with fancies of song that take us to where it is always spring-

"It was a lover, and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nomino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass
In the spring time, the only pretty rank time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nomino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In spring time."[2]

In the Quarterly Review, a critic wrote of Shakespeare's treatment of this play-

"His characters live in Arden Forest, and yet they never hear or see a single bird, or insect, or flower, all the time they are there. As for animals, deer excepted (and these the poet was compelled to introduce for food) there is only a green and gilded snake. The oak is the only forest tree in the play. There is not a flower in it. Even the words 'flower' and 'leaf' are never mentioned in the play; nor the word 'bird' except in an interpolated song."[3]

This critic, in looking for words, failed to appreciate the impressionistic background Shakespeare created for his refufees. Thorndyke commended the "dramatic skill and tact with which Shakespeare blends the familiar, his characters m making all alive, and his matchless gift of turning everything into wit and poetry."[4]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. As You Like It, Act 11, sc.1.
2 Ibid., Act v, sc. 3.
3 Sullivan E. What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. The Nineteenth Century, 73 (1913) p.784.
4 Thorndyke, Ashley. English Comedy, p.109.

Twelfth Night (1601)

Stopford Brooke regarded Twelfth Night as a dance on some festal day in an old Italian garden with the sun shining and the air clear.[1] The play contains love-making, songs, and jests; and it is musical throughout. The Duke, who is himself in love, is fond of music-

"That strain again;- it had a dying fall:
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor."[2]

The scene is indefinite,- a city on the seacoast in Illyria with woods and hills toward the interior where the Duke hunts-

"Curio- Will you go hunt, my lord?

"Duke- What, Curio?

"Curio- The hart,"[3]

Through this pun of the hart we learn of the lady who is loved by the Duke-

"Why, so I do, the noblest that I have:
O, when my eyes did see Olivia first,
Methought, she purg'd the air of pestilence;
That instant was I turned into a hart;
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me-
what news from her?"[4]

The news does not please the Duke; Olivia is wilful; she will not marry, and announces that , instead, she will spend seven years bemoaning her brother's death. To lessen his disappointment, the Duke goes out into his garden where there is no Olivia, but a romantic atmosphere.

1 Brooke, Stopford. Ten More Plays of Shakespeare, p. 33.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Twelfth Night, Act 1, sc.1.
3 Ibid., loc.cit.
4 Ibid., loc.cit.

"Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;
Love-thoughts lie rich, when canopied with bowers."[1]

Olivia has a garden as well as the Duke. Maria speaks of its box-trees and its walks-

"Maria- Get ye all three into the box-tree. Malvolio's coming down this walk."[2]

Two of the scenes are on the seacoast where both Viola and her brother are shipwrecked. From a captain Viola learns where she is, and to him she tells how she fears that her brother has not escaped from death by the storm and sea-

"Viola- What country, friends, is this?

"Cap.- Illyria, lady.

"Viola- And what should I do in Illyria?
My brother he is in Elysium.
Perchance, he is not drown'd:- What think you, sailors?"

The captain's answer is as lyrical as Illyria is romantic-

"I saw your brother,
******* bind himself
To a strong mast, that lived upon the sea;
Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves,
As long as I could see."[3]

Viola puts on boy's clothing and is hired by the Duke as a page whose duty is to move Olivia to return the Duke's love. Olivia says-

"but yet I cannot love him:
He might have took his answer long ago."

whereupon Viola argues in fanciful descriptions of nature how deep is the Duke's passion and how persistent she would be were she in his place-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Twelfth Night, Act i, sc.1.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc.5.
3 Ibid., Act 1, sc.2.

"Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
And call upon my soul within the house;
Write loyal cantons of contemned love,
And sing them aloud even in the dead of night;
Holla your name to the reverberate hills,
And make the babbling gossip of the air
Cry out, Olivia! O, you should not rest
Between the elements of air and earth,
But you should pity me."[1]

Illyria has, indeed, romantic charm; yet, while idyllic, it is restrained from becoming overworked sentimentality like pastoral Arcadia, in that the dramatis personae refer only incidentally, as the quotations on this and the preceding page show, to its atmosphere. This artistic revelation of background differs from the profuseness of description in Venus and Adonis. The setting is subordinate to the action; and, with the realistic humor of the actors, with Maria, Sir Toby Belch, the clown, and the ridiculous Malvolio, with all the excitement, Illyria does not become merely fanciful.

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Twelfth Night, Act 1. sc.5.

Tragedies

Romeo and Juliet (1594-7)

Romeo and Juliet is both romantic and tragic; and, accordingly, its scenes and images from nature are of two kinds. The same objects in nature have opposite emotional values at times in the play.[1] At other times those signifying happiness are mingled with what suggests sadness.[2] For the events of the play, Shakespeare used those in the narrative poem, Romeus and Juliet, which is an Italian story,[3] his function being not to create the matter, but to spiritualize it.[4] The play is more lyrical than dramatic. Much of the action is narrated with poetic interpretation and fancy; for instance, this is the way in which we learn in the first act of Romeo pining for Rosaline under the sycamore at night. Such pictures reveal the imagined setting and the lyric mood; yet the time devoted to their description is out of proportion to any dramatic worth they may have in connection with the action, and so they are a retarding force in the play. Mercutio begins to explain the meaning of Romeo's dream; and, in his fanciful temperament, he relates it to a fairy scene-

> "O, then I see, queen Mab hath been with you.
> She is the fairies' midwife; and she comes
> In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
> On the forefinger of an alderman,
> Drawn with a team of little atomies
> Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
> Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
> The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
> The traces, of the smallest spider's web;

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Romeo and Juliet, see quotations p. 83-86 of this thesis.
2 See p. 84 of this thesis for illustration.
3 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p.41.
4 Ibid., p. 42.

The collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry beams:
Her whip, of cricket-bone; the lash, of film:
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love."[1]

The delicacy of natural objects depicted in Mab's chariot is like that in Midsummer Night's Dream.[2] These two plays were written about the same time when Shakespeare showed more development as a poet than as a dramatist. Mercutio continues to muse about the chariot until we almost forget that it is less important than Romeo. By this speech we are reminded of the Elizabethan fondness for word-painting and ornament. However, while Mercutio hinders the progress of action, his lines present excellent poetry and literature, and they relieve the tragedy of much of its gloomy aspect.

Brooke wrote, "The hidden relation between the theme and external nature is the setting."[3] Then he referred to Romeo and Juliet as a play of darkness with a gleam of light.[4] This color scheme may be traced in certain speeches. As It draws near the time for his guests to arrive and the music is to begin, Capulet says that the hall is dark and he calls for more light.[5] Romeo shows the beauty of light in darkness when he describes Juliet-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Romeo and Juliet, Act i, sc.4.
2 See p. 59-60 of this thesis.
3 Brooke Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p.44.
4 Ibid., p. 51-59: 115.
5 Shakespeare, Wm. op. cit. Act i, sc.5.

"O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright.
Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear:
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear:
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows."[1]

When the party is ended, Romeo goes from the Capulet home and later returns to Juliet's orchard. It is dark as he climbs the high wall; then a light appears at Juliet's window, and to him Juliet is the sun.[2] She asks him how he has scaled the wall in the dark, and he answers-

"With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls;"[3]

He speaks of night's dark coat which hides him from his enemies, and then they watch the crescent moon as it begins to rise-

"Lady, by yonder moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops." [4]

Romeo starts to leave, but Juliet calls him back. In her longing not to let him slip away, she employs a figure of speech from hawking-

"Hist! Romeo, hist!- O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again."[5]

Next they arrange for their marriage; and, then, she urges him away, for " 'Tis almost morning."[6]

We now go with Romeo to Friar Lawrence' cell. The monk has arisen early, and he pictures the morning with less enthusiasm than do the lovers in their aubade-

"The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Romeo and Juliet, Act i, sc.5.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc.2.
3 Ibid., Act ii, sc.2.
4 Ibid., loc. cit.
5 Ibid., loc. cit.
6 Ibid., loc. cit.

And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's pathway, made by Titan's wheels."[1]

The sombreness of his words forebodes some gloom to come. He has been gathering herbs, and he shows his knowledge of their power and the sleeping potion which he is to give Juliet-

"O, mickle is the powerful grace, that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities."[2]

Herein nature reveals something of the friar's character and prepares the audience for the tragic scenes to follow.

The marriage ceremony is performed by the friar. Juliet returns home; and Romeo promises to meet her the next day. Juliet gives lyric expression to her eagerness for the time to pass swiftly until Romeo comes-

"Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phoebus' mansion; such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately."[3]

We have another picture of the lovers as they part in the early Italian morning. This is one of Shakespeare's few great love-scenes. Romeo and Juliet reveal their passion of love through their emotional reaction to nature. While much of the scene is a conventional painting, it shows skill in the artist. He has assembled sounds and sights suggestive of parting night and coming day, and has so arranged and blended them,- the shadows of the night with the first rays of the sun, the song of the nightingale with that of the lark-, as to produce a setting in harmony with these romantic youths-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Romeo and Juliet, Act ii, sc.3.
2 Ibid., loc.cit.
3 Ibid., Act iii, sc.2.

"Juliet- It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of mine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

"Romeo- It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops.

"Juliet- Yon light is not the daylight, I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua-

"Romeo- Yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow."[1]

This is the climax of the lyrical pictures in the play. When morning comes, Romeo leaves Juliet; for between the time of their marriage and the aubade, Romeo has slain Tybalt, a kinsman to the Capulets. He is doomed, therefore, to exile as Juliet's words regarding Mantua imply.

Until Romeo leaves, the action has been slow with the lyrical speeches and with the romantic lingerings of the lovers; but now it moves with tragic swiftness to the close. There is less time for fancy or poetry; and what is introduced has associations with sadness. When Capulet sees Juliet lying apparently dead, he is greatly moved-

"Cap.- Death lies on her, like an untimely frost,
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field."[2]

There are the ominous yew-trees, the dismal aspect of the tomb in the darkness, and again the call for light. While this light may, as Brooke suggested, indicate the love that is not conquered by death, we are not sure that Shakespeare consciously strove for the effect of the light in darkness which is

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Romeo and Juliet, Act iii, sc. 5.
2 Ibid., Act iv, sc.5.

evident throughout the play. He may easily have followed the Elizabethan tendency to contrast black and white in securing the effect which he did.

Julius Caesar (1599-1600)

Julius Caesar is a tragedy wherein nature is mingled with great human events. Brooke said that Shakespeare wrote as if a spiritual power was in touch with the deep things in man and in history.[1] The storm in this play serves a number of purposes. Accompanied with supernatural prodigies, this fearful tempest is like an omen of disaster to the state. It prepares the audience for deeds as unnatural as the storm itself, and it deepens the impression of the unrest within the minds of the conspirators. Its interpretation by various characters is affected by their different natures and by their inward states of mind regarding the plot to rid the state of Caesar. Casca is superstitious, and rushes about in trepidation; he talks of the storm to everyone he meets, so excited has it made him-

"Cic.- Good even, Casca: Brought you Caesar?
Why are you breathless? and why stare you so?

"Casca- Are you not mov'd, when all the sway of earth
Shakes, like a thing unfirm? O Cicero,
I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
Have riv'd the knotty oaks; and I have seen
The ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam
To be exalted with the threat'ning clouds.
But never till to-night, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest-dropping fire.
Either there is a civil strife in heaven;
Or else the world, too saucy with the gods,
Incenses them to send destruction."[2]

1 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p. 74.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act i, sc.3.

Casca's extreme nervousness is enhanced by the calm replies of Cicero who is not inwardly raging with thoughts of conspiracy-

"Cic.- Why, saw you anything more wonderful?"

Then, Casca, trying to obtain from Cicero a reply in sympathy with the view that the storm forebodes evil, enumerates all the supernatural happenings. But Cicero remains undisturbed. He has no part in the conspiracy, and he says-

"Indeed, it is a strange disposed time:
But men may construe things after their fashion."[1]

Though he heeds no warnings that the storm may give, Cicero introduces the name of Caesar into the conversation, and thus links, in the minds of the spectators, the portents with Caesar and the Capitol where the tragedy is to happen-

"Comes Caesar to the Capitol to-morrow?" [2]

The furor within Casca abates none in the presence of Cicero's quiet. Meeting Cassius, he begins again his talk about the storm which he can not forget, it so parallels his own excitement of mind-

"Casca- Who ever knew the heavens menace so?"

Cassius reads a different meaning from Casca's or Cicero's in the storm. He believes that it signifies Caesar-

"Now could I, Casca,
Name to thee a man most like this dreadful night;
That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars
As doth the lion in the Capitol:
A man no mightier than thyself, or me,
In personal action; yet prodigious grown,
And fearful, as these strange eruptions are."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act i, sc.3.
2 Ibid.,loc. cit.
3 Ibid.,loc.cit.

Cassius, the chief plotter, thinks more deeply than Casca does; and, instead of being roused with emotions like Casca's, he makes the storm predict Caesar's end, - that which is foremost in his mind-

> "For now, this fearful night,
> There is no stir, or walking in the streets;
> And the complexion of the element
> Is favour'd, like the work we have in hand,
> Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible."[1]

The storm abates; that is, the rain ceases, but lightning continues. The scene is Brutus' garden. At first he is alone. He has heeded little the tempest which, in its madness, is less than the struggle within his mind. Caesar is his friend whom he loves. But Cassius, in his strategy, has led Brutus to observe Caesar as a possible enemy to the state. Brutus, being open-minded and credulous, reflects on Cassius' hints. Being patriotic as Cassius well knew, he philosophizes on how Caesar may use success as a means to ruin Rome-

> "But 'tis a common proof,
> That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
> Whereto the climber upward turns his face:
> But when he once attains the utmost round,
> He then unto the ladder turns his back,
> Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
> By which he did ascend: So Caesar may;
> Then, lest he may, prevent."[2]

The other conspirators arrive, and, in the starless night, they discuss their plans for killing Caesar-

> "Brutus- I cannot, by the progress of the stars,
> Give guess how near the day."

The blackness of the night symbolizes the evil conspirators,

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act i, sc.3.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc.i.

and supplies a dramatic background in harmony with the thoughts of the characters-

"O conspiracy!
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night
When evils are most free? O, then, by day,
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mark thy monstrous visage?"[1]

Brutus speaks these words when the conspirators come masked. He is almost ashamed of what he is conspiring, and to him the bloody designs appear more terrible than the black night; for masks are worn to conceal from the night what it is not dark enough to hide.

Shakespeare has skillfully presented the passing of the night and the approach of morning by what the actors say, as they mingle common talk with serious, and as their plans are matured, and they are busy thinking of executing their murderous intentions-

"Cas. Good-morrow, Brutus; Do we trouble you?

"Bru.-I have been up this hour, awake all night.

****

"Dec.-Here lies the east: Doth not the day break here?

"Casca- No.

"Cinna- O, pardon, sir, it doth; and yon grey lines
That fret the clouds are messengers of day.

"Casca- You shall confess, that you are both deceiv'd.
Here, as I point my sword, the sun arises;
Which is a great way growing on the south,
Weighing the useful season of the year.
Some two months hence, up higher toward the north
He first presents his fire: and the high east
Stands, as the Capitol, directly here."

In Casca's speech the Capitol is mentioned as of importance as if the conspirators can not concentrate on what does not

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act ii, sc.1.

affect their plans; and he remarks that the season is early because the sun is south of the equator, and thereby connects the conspiracy with the soothsayer's warning for Caesar to beware the Ides of March.

Then Cassius marks the time-

"The clock hath stricken three."

And Casca-

"The morning comes upon us."[1]

This scene, like the morning scene in Romeo and Juliet, is valuable in disclosing the emotional response of the characters to the passing of time before some dramatic occasion; in the earlier play, there is the joy of the lovers and the sadness connected with Romeo's departure; and, in the latter one, the tragic suspense before the murder is committed.

In the theatre of Shakespeare's time, it would be difficult to give an illusion of darkness and even more the approach of daylight. Most shows were given in the daytime, and the theatres had no roofs to shut out the light. Torches were carried to symbolize darkness; and, in private theatres, shutters were drawn on certain cues.

Before leaving Brutus' orchard, the conspirators talk of Caesar's attitude regarding the supernatural tempest which, they fear, will keep him from going to the Capitol-

"Cas.- For he is superstitious grown of late;
Quite from the main opinion he held once
Of fantasy, of dreams:
****

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act ii, sc.1.

It may be, these apparent prodigies,
May hold him from the Capitol to-day."[1]

The next scene is at Caesar's home where Calphurnia and he also discourse about the storm. Calphurnia has dreamed of Caesar's murder-

"Caes.- Nor heaven, nor earth, have been at peace to-night:
Thrice hath Calphurnia in her sleep cried out,
Help, ho! they murder Caesar."

Caesar is superstitious enough to consult the auguries regarding the significance of the dream and the dire events; but neither Calphurnia's entreaty telling him that , when beggars die, no comets are seen, nor the unfavorable report of the priests can keep him from the Capitol. He almost dares nature by the boldness of his words, as though he were more than mortal-

"No; Caesar shall not: Danger knows full well,
That Caesar is more dangerous than he.
We were two lions litter'd in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible;
And Caesar shall go forth."[2]

At the Capitol Caesar again expresses his fearlessness, and shows himself overconfident and proud. In Shakespeare's play, Caesar is not the great Roman hero except in what others say of him-

"But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fix'd, and resting quality,
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,
They are all fire, and everyone doth shine;
But there's but one in all doth hold his place:
So, in the world: 'Tis furnish'd well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet, in the number, I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshak'd of motion: and, that I am he."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act ii, sc.i.
2 Ibid., Act ii, sc.2.
3 Ibid., Act iii, sc.1.

This boasting by Caesar differs from the philosophy of Brutus who perceives that he has chosen the wrong course in furthering the death of his friend. His lines are lyrical, and portray deeper feeling than Caesar's-

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune:
> Omitted all the voyage of their life
> Is bound in shallows, and in miseries.
> On such a full sea are we now afloat;
> And we must take the current when it serves,
> Or lose our ventures."[1]

In this play, nature has revealed much about characters. It has shown us Casca in his trepidation, Cicero unmov'd, Caesar as a braggart, and Brutus as a philosopher. Likewise, it has, with its darkness and its portents, augmented the tragic impression of the play. This atmosphere of tragedy was lacking in the English historical plays wherein deaths occurred one after another in rapid succession.

Macbeth (1606)

Shakespeare increased the impression of tragic atmosphere in Romeo and Juliet and Julius Caesar by the use of darkness which is associated with the time when evil deeds are done. But a blacker darkness than that of Juliet's tomb or Brutus' orchard pervades Macbeth. Darkness is mentioned again and again. It is as inseparable from the play as Macbeth's foul plots to become king and to keep the title-

> "Ban.- Thou hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
> As the weird women promis'd; and, I fear,
> Thou play'dst most foully for't: "[2]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Julius Caesar, Act iv, sc.3.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Macbeth, Act iii, sc.1.

Brooke recognized Macbeth's soul as one with the tempest-blasted heath and the supernatural cries.[1] In this play metaphors are never prolonged as in Lucrece, and the force of their swift interpretative power helps secure the tragic intensity which characterizes Macbeth-

> "Stars, hide your fires; let not light
> See my deep and dark desires."[2]

The importance of blackness in Macbeth is clearly explained by Bradley-

"Darkness, we may even say blackness, broods over this tragedy. It is remarkable that almost all the scenes which at once recur to the memory take place either at night or in some dark spot. The vision of the dagger, the murder of Duncan, the murder of Banquo, the sleep-walking of Lady Macbeth, all come in night scenes. The witches dance in the thick of a storm; 'black and midnight hags'receive Macbeth in a cavern. The blackness of night is to the hero a thing to fear, even of horror; and that which he feels becomes the spirit of the play. The faint glimmerings of the western sky at twilight are here menacing: it is the hour when the traveler hastens to reach safety in his inn, and when Banquo rides homeward to meet his assassins: the hour when 'light thickens'; when 'night's black agents to their prey do rouse', when the wolf begins to howl, and the owl to scream, and withered murder steals forth to his work. Macbeth bids the stars hide their fires that his 'black' desires may be concealed:Lady Macbeth calls on thick night to come. palled in the dunnest smoke of hell. The moon is down and no stars shine when Banquo, dreading the dreams of the coming night, goes unwilling to bed, and leaves Macbeth to wait for the summons of the little bell. When the next day should dawn, its light is 'strangled and darkness doth the face of earth entomb.' In the whole drama the sun seems to shine only twice: first in the beautiful and ironical passage where Duncan sees the swallows flitting round the castle of death; and afterwards, when at the close, the avenging army gathers to rid the earth of its shame. Of the many slighter touches which deepen this effect I notice only one. The failure of nature in Lady Macbeth is marked by her fear of darkness; 'she has light by her continually'. And in one phrase of fear that escapes her lips even in sleep, it is of the darkness; 'Hell is murky'."[3]

1 Brooke, Stopford. On Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p.188.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Macbeth, Act i, sc.4.
3 Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur. Notes on Shakespeare's Workmanship, p.30-33.

In regard to the ironical description which Bradley mentioned above, we are in accord with his interpretation. Duncan expresses his enjoyment of nature in its calm and quiet at Forres-

> "This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
> Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
> Unto our gentle senses."[1]

In his words there is trust in Macbeth and Lady Macbeth who entertain him. Duncan's tranquil thoughts on the evening before his murder, by their very contrast to the deceitful plans of his host and hostess who would

> "look like the innocent flower,
> But be the serpent under't"[2],

make his death appear intensely dramatic.

Banquo, as well as Duncan, is moved by the peaceful aspect of nature at Forres, and shows more interest in it than he did in the witches who met Macbeth and him on the heath-

> "This guest of summer,
> The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
> By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
> Smells wooingly here; no jutty, frieze, buttress,
> Nor coigne of vantage, but this bird hath made
> His pendent bed, and procreant cradle: Where they
> Most breed and haunt, I have observ'd, the air
> Is delicate."[3]

Although he shows more suspicion of Macbeth than Duncan does[4], Banquo's attitude toward nature is so different from Macbeth's as to make his own murder tragic.

In Macbeth there is darkness, a night more terrible than Caesar's, lightning to enhance the blackness, and supernatural

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Macbeth, Act 1, sc.6.
2 Ibid., Act 1, sc.5.
3 Ibid., Act 1, sc.6.

happenings. There is, too, another color than black which aids the tragic impression, and that color is the crimson color of blood. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth can not escape it-

"Macbeth- Will all great Neptune's ocean wash the blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

"Lady Macbeth- My hands are of your colour: but I shame
To wear a heart so white."[1]

" Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;"[2]

" Lady Macbeth- Out damned spot! out, I say!"

" Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?"[3]

" What, will these hands never be clean"?

"Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."[4]

Watt felt a breath from Scotland in the scenes of Macbeth. He considered Shakespeare's treatment of the weird desert place,- "the bare moor where the human foot shrinks in loneliness, the empty spaces, and the gust of the moor" imaginative art dealing with realistic material.[5] It is true, as Watt has said, that the nature images call to mind at once the wastes of the Scottish heath, and it is appropriate that here Macbeth should meet the weird sisters.

The witches in Macbeth have had many interpretations.[6] They are connected with the evils in nature ; and, whenever they are seen, it is in "thunder, lightning, or in rain."

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Macbeth, Act ii, sc.2.
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc.4.
3 Ibid., Act v, sc.i.
4 Ibid., Act. loc.cit.
5 See Watt, Lauclean. Attic and Elizabethan Tragedy, p. 287-312.
Snider, Denton J. The Shakespearian Drama, p.214.
Brooke, Stopford. Ten Plays of Shakespeare, p. 183-186.

As Macbeth and Banquo are coming from the battle, all is fair, until they see the witches. Then all is changed and

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair."[1]

Macbeth is the victim of his imagination which soars at times when he is under terrific stress. The slightest thought awakens him to flights of words, showing sometimes in their relation to the power of the witches over nature how much he thinks about their prophecies-

"Answer me,
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodg'd, and trees blown down
****
Though the treasure
Of nature's germins tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken, answer me."[2]

Witches were thought to have power to loosen or control the winds; and, for this reason, trees were often planted in churchyards to protect the churches from the winds which the evil spirits might 'untie'.[3]

In the last quotation, Macbeth shows how steeled is his courage. This quality to brave everything is evident also in-

"Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear."[4]

And when he sees the boughs approaching as they are borne in front of his enemy's soldiers-

"They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly
But, bearlike, I must fight the course."[5]

And finally when he encounters Macduff and knows his doom-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Macbeth, Act 1, sc.1.
2 Ibid., Act iv, sc. 1.
3 Dyer, T. F. Folklore of Shakespeare, p.33.
4 Shakespeare, Wm. op.cit. Act v, sc.3.
5 Ibid., Act v, sc. 7.

"I'll not yield,
* ********
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane."[1]

In such ways as we have shown, Macbeth's interpretation of nature, whether supernatural or not, reflects his nature and thoughts.

Hamlet (1602-4)

Nature effects tragic atmosphere less directly in Hamlet than in Macbeth and in Julius Caesar. It is not so much involved with the action and thought of the characters as in Macbeth, where the blackness and the supernatural seem ingrained within the mind of Macbeth; nor does the supernatural appearance of the ghost cause for Hamlet such concern as does the tempest in Julius Caesar for Casca. Both Macbeth and Casca are guilty of wicked intentions, while Hamlet has no evil designs to forward ambition. He simply wavers constantly between avenging his father's death as the ghost urges him to do and leaving undone a deed repugnant to his conscience. While nature influences Hamlet but slightly, the opening scene of the play has a setting suitable for the appearance of the ghost. Guards are being relieved on a place above the sea near Elsinore. The night is cold; the time is midnight, and morning gradually approaches-

"Fran.- You come most carefully upon your hour.
'Tis now struck twelve."

"Ber.- Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,-"[2]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Macbeth, Act v, sc.7.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act i, sc.1.

Then the ghost appears, coming from his confine beneath the stage by way of a trap-door. The arrival of the ghost would, in this way, be sudden to the actors who are not facing the ghost at first. After it leaves, the imaginations of the men are roused, and they give poetic expression to their thoughts. Horatio strikes the tragic note of the play by linking the meaning of the ghost with that of the supernatural in Julius Caesar-

> "A little ere the mighty Julius fell,
> The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
> Did squeak and gibber in the streets.
> **********
> As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
> Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,
> Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
> Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
> And even the like precurse of fierce events,-
> As harbingers preceding still the fates,
> And prologue to the omen coming on,
> Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
> Unto our climatures and countrymen."[1]

In his speech Horatio infers that the ghost has come to foreshadow dire events in Denmark as the unnatural storm does in Rome.

The ghost reappears; but, at the signal of the cock's crowing, it hies away below the ground. And, when it is gone, the men ruminate on the belief that ghosts always leave at such a time-

> "Ber,- It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
>
> "Hor.- And then it started, like a guilty thing
> Upon a fearful summons. I have heard
> The cock, that is the trumpet of the morn,
> Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
> Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
> Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
> The extravagant and erring spirit hies
> To his confine: and of the truth herein
> This present object made probation."[2]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act i, sc.1.
2 Ibid., Act i, sc.1.

Marcellus' interpretation of the supernatural occurrence is idealistic. Instead of perturbing him, it wakens within him quiet and salutary thought and reflection. It is through this reaction to nature that we obtain the impression of Marcellus' calmness and elevated thinking-

> "Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
> The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
> And they say no spirit dares stir abroad;
> The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike
> No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
> So hallow'd and so gracious is the time."[1]

While the connection of the ghost's departing at cock-crow with the peace of the Christmas season was not original with Shakespeare, its power is due to his imaginative treatment of the material already created, and to his adapting it to his need of producing dramatic atmosphere and revealing Marcellus' character. Even the meter is retarded in keeping with Marcellus' deliberateness of thought. To read the lines rapidly is difficult, while in Macbeth thoughts and words fashion themselves with lightning speed.

Hamlet watches the next night for the ghost. It is again nipping cold, and the ghost comes at the same hour as on the previous night. It tells Hamlet of his father's murder, and pictures the scene of its occurrence so that what has happened before the play opens is clear to the spectators-

> "Sleeping within my orchard,
> My custom always of the afternoon,
> Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
> With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
> And in the porches of mine ear did pour
> The leperous distilment: whose effect

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act i, sc.1.

Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body."[1]

This passage in which the usurping king poisons his brother with hebenon reminds us of the sleeping potion of herbs which Friar Lawrence gave Juliet, though not intentionally to produce death, but eventually causing it.[2]

While nature itself influences Hamlet but little, he occasionally uses lyrical images from nature to explain his philosophy. In a soliloquy regarding the corruption of his kingdom, he says-

"'Tis an unweeded garden; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely."[3]

Though he is Prince of Denmark, the throne does not become Hamlet's at the King's death; for it is transmitted through the Queen, and he is almost helpless to remedy the state of affairs unless he should kill the king, his uncle, for the good of the people. In contrasting his own father with his uncle, he uses a hyperbole from nature to reveal the care of the first king for his mother whose love in return is shallow-

"so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly."[4]

We have a glimpse of Ophelia as Laertes departs for France. He delivers a long speech to her, trying to persuade her to shun Hamlet. She humbly accepts his advice; and then, in a figure of speech, gives us our estimate of his character-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act i, sc.5.
2 See Romeo and Juliet, Acts iv and v.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act i, sc. 2.
4 Ibid., loc.cit.

"But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read."[1]

Flowers are connected with Ophelia in different ways. She herself was particularly fond of them. They are used so as to heighten the pathos of her madness and her death. In her frenzy, she comes in decked with flowers and saddens Laertes who calls her "Rose of May"[2]; then just before her death she interprets the flowers suggestive of sadness-

"Oph.- There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's rue for you; and here's some for me:- we may call it, grace o' Sundays:- you may wear your rue with a difference.- There's a daisy:- I would give you some violets; but they withered all, when my father died:- [3]

Here Ophelia mentions the rue as meaning sorrow, and the violet has to do with early death.

Ophelia's death is due to an accident while she is amusing herself playing with flowers. Immediately on hearing of Ophelia's misfortune, the Queen relates how it is associated with flowers and the willow, a symbol of sadness-

"There is a willow grows aslant the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them;
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And mermaid-like, a while they bore her up."[4]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act i, sc.3.
2 Ibid., Act iv, sc.v.
3 Ibid., loc. cit.
4 Ibid., Act iv, sc.7.

These lines by the queen are more lyrical than dramatic; yet they deepen the sadness connected with Ophelia's death. We gain from them in no way. however, a better understanding of the queen's personality. They might have been said by any other character in the play, but they do relieve the harshness of the situation in which the girl has become mad. The flowers the queen mentions are those which grew about Stratford, and Shakespeare's notice of the color on the under side of the willow as reflected in the water, and the growth of the tree aslant the brook receive here poetic interpretation. Long purples were an April-blooming orchis of meadows and pastures. The roots were so palmate and pale that Shakespeare called them "dead men's fingers."[1]

Coleridge has given imaginative treatment to the death of Ophelia. "In the beginning", he said, "she lay like a little projection of land in a lake or stream, covered with spray flowers." Reaching quiet waters, she was like a fairy isle which after a while sinks without an eddy.[2]

When Laertes learns of her death , he regards her as the violet which she herself has referred to in connection with the death of one who is very young-

> "And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring."[3]

And finally the queen strews the grave of Ophelia with flowers.

1 Dyer, T. F. Folklore of Shakespeare, p. 226-7.
2 Brooke, Stopford. Ten More Plays of Shakespeare, p.165.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. Hamlet, Act v, sc.1.

Othello (1604)

Nature in Othello as in Hamlet does not so powerfully create tragic atmosphere as in other plays we have studied. However, Brooke was able to see warning of tragedy in the dark night at the opening of the play when Iago and Roderigo waken Brabantio with shouts to tell him that his daughter, Desdemona, has eloped with Othello, the Moor of Venice.[1] While we do not perceive this Venetian night to be of great dramatic import, it is a fitting background for the carousing and the initiating of Iago's intrigue.

Brooke likewise interpreted the storm at the beginning of the second act as foreboding tragic events. In Macbeth, Julius Caesar, and Lear, nature is portrayed as nearly inseparable from the thoughts and passions of the characters, while in this play as in The Tempest the associations connected with a storm simply lead us to expect tragedy rather than comedy. This scene in Othello is valuable in several other ways: it links Act I with the rest of the play by showing Othello in command of the fleet which was ordered to proceed to Cyprus, and by the account of the sinking of the Turkish ships which he was sent to destroy; in depicting the surge and the billows, it gives an actual setting characteristic of the island of Cyprus which Othello in his valiancy was to protect against the pirates; it also manifests the intense excitement of the people of Cyprus as they watch from the outermost point of land for a sail-

1 Brooke, Stopford. Ten More Plays of Shakespeare, p.176.

"Montano- What from the cape can you discern at sea?

"I Gent.- Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail.

"Mon.- Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at land:
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? what shall we hear of this?
****
If that the Turkish fleet
Be not inshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
It is impossible they bear it out.
****

"4 Gent.- the town is empty: on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry - a sail."[1]

Othello, who is temperamental- in ecstasies of happiness at one time, and in passionate anger at another-, is joyous at the thought that in place of the hardships he has endured at sea there will be the pleasure of being with Desdemona again-

"Othello- It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high; and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven! If I were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

"Des.- The heavens forbid,
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow!"[2]

As when Duncan and Banquo find repose in the gentle aspects of nature before their tragic deaths, so here there is an irony in Othello's and Desdemona's delight in the calm after the storm; for what physical suffering and fear they have experienced at sea can not equal their mental anguish, when once through Iago's craft

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Othello, Act ii, sc.1.
2 Ibid., loc. cit.

"the green-eyed monster, jealousy," rouses the passion of Othello which, he tells us, is

> "Like to the Propontic sea,
> Whose icy current and compulsive course
> Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
> To the Propontic, and the Hellespont:
> Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
> Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
> Till that a capable and wide revenge
> Swallow them up.- Now, by yond' marble heaven,
> In the due reverence of a sacred vow
> I here engage my words."[1]

In this speech Othello is moved by impetuosity; he has been prejudiced by Iago, who knew that Othello was not a deep thinker, that he would not weigh evidence for and against his action. Had he been deliberate as was Hamlet, Othello might have lived happily with Desdemona instead of falling prey to Iago who was bent on mischief-making. Iago knows that he has effected the trouble he desires and says-

> "Not poppy nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou owd'st yesterday."[2]

His meaning is that Othello's passion is so great that it will lead to action to be greatly repented and will rob Othello forever of the peace he enjoyed after the storm.

Regarding the handkerchief so important in establishing Desdemona's guilt, Othello refers to its magic origin so that the significance of the gift as a token of his love is not overlooked-

> " 'Tis true: there's magic in the web of it.
> A sybil, that had number'd in the world
> The sun to make two hundred compasses,
> In her prophetic fury sew'd the work:
> The worms were hallow'd, that did breed the silk,
> And it was died in mummy, which the skilful
> Conserv'd of maidens' hearts."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Othello, Act iii, sc. 3.
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc.3.
3 Ibid., Act iii, sc.4.

As the tragedy advances towards its dramatic close, Desdemona has a premonition of ill by the song of willow that constantly comes to her mind-

"My mother had a maid call'd- Barbara;
She was in love; and he she lov'd prov'd mad,
And did forsake her: she had a song of-willow,
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it: That song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind;"[1]

Then she sings the song of willow, that of maidens whose lovers desert them; and, by its sadness, it deepens the dramatic impression of her death at the hands of Othello who is blind to her innocence.

King Lear (1605-6)

King Lear is a tragedy showing the inevitable punishment of a ruler's human weakness and rash judgment. At the beginning of the play, Gloster connects unusual happenings in nature with the superstitious belief that they predict ill-

"These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us."[2]

The fool is the first to speak of the ingratitude of Lear's daghters-

"The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young."[3]

Then Lear, becoming impassioned, curses Goneril as he wishes nature to bring harm to her-

"You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride."[4]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Othello, Act iv, sc,3.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. King Lear, Act i, sc.2.
3 Ibid., Act i, sc.4.
4 Ibid., Act ii, sc.4.

While he speaks, a storm rages without; and, unwanted by his daughters, he rushes out where he becomes a victim of the tempest. The storm raging without parallels and accentuates the storm raging within Lear, and the wildness and stretch of the heath accords with his infinite human passion. Brooke observed character development in Lear during the storm at times when the madness is not insanity.[1] At first he merely battles with the elements so much like his own struggling-

> "Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks, rage! blow!
> You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout
> Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks,
> You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
> Vaunt couriers to oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
> Singe my white head! and thou, all-shaking thunder,
> Strike flat the thick rotundity of the world."[2]

Later he forgets physical discomfort, and finds relief in the hurricane which is less than his mental passion. When a hovel is found for shelter, he does not enter it immediately; for he feels that the storm, in occupying his attention, will relieve him from his own thoughts-

> "This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
> On things would hurt me more."[3]

Once within the hut, he diverts his thought with regard for others who may be suffering from the storm-

> "Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
> That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
> How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
> Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
> From seasons such as these?"[4]

The subplot of Lear resembles the main theme in that Gloster disinherits his own son, Edgar, because of intrigue of Edmund,

1 Brooke, Stopford. Ten More Plays of Shakespeare, p. 215-217.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. King Lear, Act 111, sc.2.
3 Ibid., Act 111, sc.4.
4 Ibid., Act iii, sc.3.

brother to Edgar. As Lear suffers for his reliance upon words, we also see Gloster in as great agony as Lear. Robbed of his eyesight by his enemies and fallen from courtly favor, like Lear, he betakes himself to the heath. There he meets Edgar who pretends to be mad Tom, and he asks for safe conduct to Dover cliff. The scene is of dramatic importance in showing the care and anxiety of Edgar for Gloster, as he paints the scene of the cliff as though he were observing every detail-

"Glo.- "When shall we come to the top of yon same hill?'

"Edg.- You do climb it now: look, how we labour.

"Glo.- Methinks the ground is even.

"Edg.- Horrible steep:
Hark, do you hear the sea?

"Glo.- No, truly.

"Edg.- Why, then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
****
Here's the place:- Stand still.- How fearful
And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eye so low!
The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Show scarce as gross as beetles: Half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire; dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head;
The fishermen that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice, and yon tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy,
Almost too small for sight: The murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high:- I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

"Glo.- Set me where you stand.

"Edg.- Give me your hand. You are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap aright."[1]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. <u>King Lear</u>, Act iv, sc.6.

Fearing that Gloster may be seeking death, Edgar has not led the blind man to the place bidden; but, what he says of the cliff is so realistic that Gloster is deceived and jumps as though to his death. Edgar has not only portrayed the cliff in its aspect of proclivity, but he has represented each image in proportion to its relative distance away. One would expect to hear the rush of the sea before reaching the summit, and Edgar mentions this before he arrives at the supposed top of the hill. He presents the samphire gatherers, who hang from ropes to a distance halfway down, as large as their own heads, while the fishermen below are diminished to the size of mice.

Edgar who has withdrawn a short distance rescues Gloster as though the latter had really fallen from the cliff. He continues to keep his point of view of the steepness, and shows Gloster the marvel of the escape from death-

> "Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
> So many fathom down precipitating,
> Thou hadst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost breathe;
> Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound."[1]

Gloster is uncertain whether he has fallen or not, since Edgar has pictured so vividly what accords with what was expected to happen; so, to assure him, Edgar represents the lark's shrill note as unable to penetrate the distance Gloster has fallen-

> "the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
> Cannot be seen or heard."[2]

Since Gloster blessed Edgar before the leap, Edgar now makes himself known to his father, and assures him that the fiend, poor Tom, purposely conducted Gloster to the cliff, while he himself has come in time to rescue Gloster from death-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. <u>King Lear</u>, Act iv, sc.6.
2 <u>Ibid</u>., loc.cit.

"Edg.- This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?

"Glo.- A poor unfortunate beggar.

"Edg.- As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd, and wav'd, like the enridg'd sea;
It was some fiend: therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee?"[1]

Lear's appearance decked as he is in flowers , like Ophelia in her madness, adds deeper pathos to the situation, and links the two stories as their chief characters in suffering for their own weaknesses come together here on the place which Gloster believes so dangerous. The cliff represents the nearness to ruin from which the devoted but slandered son rescues Gloster and the opportunity for proof of Edgar's constancy. Likewise, when in the extremity of need, Lear finds solace in Cordelia, who tenders him as though he has never done her wrong. Shakespeare has given us a picture of Cordelia as she reads how her sisters have treated him-

"patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once; her smiles and tears
Were like a better day: Those happy smiles,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes: which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd.- In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it."[2]

In the war between France and England, Lear and Cordelia are taken prisoners by the army of her sisters. In figures and allusions from nature, Lear shows that he has lost his selfishness and passion, and he finds content in Cordelia in the calamity which they share-

1 Shakespeare, Wm. King Lear, Act iv, sc.6.
2 Ibid., Act iv, sc.7.

"Lear- Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, ****
****
And we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon."[1]

Timon of Athens (1607-8)

In Timon of Athens there are two passages with nature in sympathy with human weakness. Timon has lost his faith in human nature. He has become heavily indebted for spending money lavishly on banquets and entertainments. Chided by his lords for his careless expenditures, he feels himself unappreciated and friendless. Instead of accepting help and advice from those about him, he wishes to have no dealings with human beings and betakes himself in exile to a cave near the sea. Distrustful of all flattery, he wishes to die and obtains satisfaction from the thought that the waves beating lightly over his grave will heed him more than has all humanity-

"I am sick of this false world; and will love nought
But even the mere necessities of it.
Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave;
Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat
Thy grave-stone daily;[2]

And after his death when they find Timon's grave, the senators observe the sympathy which he, in his unfriendly and friendless state, gained from nature-

"Though thou abhorred'st in us our human griefs,
********** *
yet rich conceit
Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye
On thy low grave, on faults forgiven."[3]

1 Shakespeare, Wm. King Lear, Act v, sc.3.
2 Shakespeare, Wm. Timon of Athens, Act iv, sc.3.
3 Ibid., Act v, sc.5.

Antony and Cleopatra (1607-8)

Romeo and Juliet shows the swift love of youth, Juliet being only fourteen; Antony and Cleopatra, another romantic tragedy, a lifetime of love in a man and a woman, both of brilliant personality. Its scenes are not definitely localized, but the actors furnish glimpses of the Egyptian country. We are constantly reminded that this is Egypt. There are the pyramids, the Nile, crocodiles, serpents, flies, and gnats. In contrast to these are the splendour and the power of imagery according with her Siren charm in Enobarbus' picture of Cleopatra's barge-

"Eno.- The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple with sails, and so perfum'd that
The winds were love-sick with them: the oars were silver;
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion(cloth of gold, of tissue)
O'erpicturing that Venus, where we see
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
Stood pretty,dimpled boys , like smiling Cupids,
With diverse-coloured fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they did , undid.

"Agr.- O rare for Antony!

"Eno.- Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,
And made their bends adornings: at the helm
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her."[1]

In this speech of Enobarbus' there is the "sweep of superlative language" which Griggs has said characterizes the play.[2] The hyperboles are rich in color with the purple sails, the brightness of silver and gold combined, and the diverse-coloured fans.

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Antony and Cleopatra, Act ii, sc.2.
2 Griggs, Edward Howard. Syllabus of Ten Lectures, p.17.

They would be out of place in describing Juliet, but suitable for the splendour of Cleopatra's personality. It was she whom age could not wither.[1] "She is of earth, but that earth is almost fire" was Griggs' estimate of her.[2] This statement is illustrated in the difference in emotional power between Octavia and her. When Antony is about to leave Rome for Egypt, Octavia's feeling is expressed by-

"The April's in her eyes."[3]

but of Cleopatra, when Antony is to withdraw from Egypt, Enobarbus says-

"We cannot call her winds and waters, sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report ."[4]

There are in the play descriptions and figures from nature to interpret physical and mental action of the dramatis personae. We have a picture of Cleopatra angling. She relates this sport to that of ensnaring Antony by the power of her charm-

"Give me my angle,- We'll to the river: there,
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finn'd fishes; my bended hook shall pierce
Their slimy jaws; and, as I draw them up,
I'll think them everyone an Antony,
And say, Ah, ha! you're caught."[5]

The scenes do not all occur in Egypt, some being far from that country. Antony and Enobarbus are on board Pompey's ship at Misenum. There is a banquet; and a bacchanal song is sung

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Antony and Cleopatra, Act 11, sc.2.
2 Griggs, Edward H. Syllabus of Twelve Lectures, p.17.
3 Shakespeare, Wm. op.cit., Act iii, sc.2.
4 Ibid., Act 1, sc.2.
5 Ibid., Act ii, sc.5.

strengthening the impression of the revelry on the ship and of the alluring life at Alexandria-

"Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne:
In thy vats our cares be drown'd;
With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd;
Cup us, till the world go round:
Cup us, till the world go round:"[1]

One scene is depicted showing Antony and Cleopatra in ignominious light. That is their disgraceful sea-flight from Actium. Scarus, watching the battle, describes the retreat in figures about nature.

"The brise upon her, like a cow in June,
Hoists sails, and flies.
****
She once being loof'd,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing, and like a doting mallard,
Leaves the fight in height, flies after her:"[2]

As the fates of Antony and Cleopatra approach, Antony sketches nature foreboding ill-

"Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish;
A vapour, sometime, like a bear, or lion,
A tower'd citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world,
And mock our eyes with air: Thou hast seen these signs;
They are black vesper's pageants."[3]

Cleopatra's enchantment of Antony is evident in the foregoing illustrations, and she herself shows the magnitude of his power over her in-

"His legs bestrid the ocean: his rear'd arm
Crested the world: his voice was propertied
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Antony and Cleopatra, Act ii, sc.7.
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc.8.
3 Ibid., Act iv, sc. 12.

> But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
> He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
> There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas,
> That grew the more by reaping; His delights
> Were dolphin-like; they show'd his back above
> The element they liv'd in: In his livery
> Walk'd crowns, and crow nets; realms and islands were
> As plates dropp'd from his pocket."[1]

In Antony and Cleopatra we have observ'd nature in a more vivid aspect than in other plays and forcefully used to interpret character,- that element of personality most emphasized i n in Shakespeare's tragedies.

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Antony and Cleopatra, Act iii, sc.8.

LATER COMEDIES

After he had written the comedies in which there is emphasis on verbal wit and repartee, and after he had produced his tragedies in which there is deep study of human character, motives, and retribution for sin, Shakespeare wrote several romantic comedies having tragic events as did Romeo and Juliet, but happy in ending like Merchant of Venice. The favorite theme is to transport a princess to a land far away from court surroundings, and, under the influence of healthful country atmosphere, to develop in her ideal traits of character. In so doing, Shakespeare does not present a scene entirely realistic, but unreal in that he has combined nature from England, far-distant countries, and mythology so as to produce romantic atmosphere. We observed unreal realistic scenes in the earlier plays; for example, Arden Forest of As You Like It.[1]: But, in these later comedies, nature is almost etherealized to harmonize with the idealized virtues of the heroines.

Cymbeline (1610)

Cymbeline is king of Britain. He has reared Posthumous in his court; but, when the latter marries the princess, Imogen, Cymbeline is incensed and banishes Posthumous; for he intends Imogen to be wedded to Cloten, the foolish son of the second queen. Dire consequences follow this act of Cymbeline's, and, but for chance, the outcome would have been as tragic as in Romeo and Juliet. Thorndyke has regarded Imogen as an ideal woman summoned to all sorts of tragic trials and misfortunes, the outcome of which is uncertain until the denouement.[2]

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1. See p. 71-72 of this thesis.
2. Thorndyke, Ashley: English Comedy, p. 130

Naturally she is saddened by her husband's forced departure and by the strain of her life at the palace where both her father and step-mother favor Cloten and incite his advances to her. In her unhappiness, Imogen longs for the idyllic life of the country-

> "Imogen- Would I were
> A neat-herd's daughter! and my Leonatus
> Our neighbor shepherd's son."[1]

Not only does the king "like the tyrannous breathing from the north, shake all their buds from growing,"[2] but the queen plots Imogen's death. She sends her ladies to gather flowers to occupy their attention, while she prepares a poison in a box which she lets fall where Pisanio will pick it up. When he does so, she urges him to give its contents to Imogen as a restorative of health. Her slight heed of the flowers which her attendants bring in show her mind to be occupied with thoughts uninfluenced by wholesome nature-

> "well done, well done:
> The violets, cowslips, and the primroses,
> Bear to my closet: Fare thee well, Pisanio;
> Think on my words."[3]

In attempting to win Imogen's love, Cloten has musicians sing an aubade to her-

> "Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
> And Phoebus 'gins arise,
> His steeds to water at those springs
> On chalic'd flowers that lies;
> And winking Mary-buds begin
> To ope their golden eyes;
> With everything that pretty bin:
> My lady sweet, arise;
> Arise, arise."[4]

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1 Shakespeare, Wm.: Cymbeline, Act 1, sc.2.
2 Ibid., Act 1, sc. 3
3 Ibid., Act. 1, sc. 6
4 Ibid., Act 11, sc. 3.

This is an exquisite recreation of the popular dawn song, and is appropriate when related, as it is, to Imogen with her beauty of person and character. But Moore has shown that Cloten's character is a violent contrast to hers by his vulgar words following the fresh lyric of the morning."[1] Cloten has no appreciation of the song only that it may secure Imogen for him; and the coarseness he betrays, in his interpretation of it, at the suggestion of Proteus, had musicians play and sing the Lyric, Who is Silvia?, a poetic fancy incongruous to Thurio's imbecility.[2]

But Imogen has more harrowing troubles than living in the midst of a family seeking to undermine her love for Posthumous and even desirous of her death: Iachimo has made Posthumous believe that Imogen is not constant in her love, for he has the bracelet given her by Posthumous. Like Othello, Posthumous does not stop to think; he immediately orders his servant, Pisanio, to lead her to Milford Haven and there to slay her. Imogen thinks she is to meet Posthumous at Milford Haven, and she expresses her eagerness to be there-in-

"O, for a horse with wings."[3]

while Pisanio shows his dread of the approaching hour by telling her that a score of miles "Twixt sun and sun"[4] are enough for them to travel.

On reaching the appointed place, Pisanio gives Imogen

1 Moore, J. R.: Function of Songs in Shakespeare's Plays, p. 91.
2 See p. 56.
3 Shakespeare, Wm.: Cymbeline, Act iii, sc. 2.
4 Ibid., Act iii, sc. 2.

Posthumous' letter to read. He is convinced that she is slandered wrongfully, and to strengthen the impression of what harm calumniation does, he compares it to venom, in lyric verses which delay the deed he is to do-

> "No, 'tis slander;
> Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue
> Outvenoms all the worms of Nile; whose breath
> Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie
> All corners of the world: kings, queens, and states,
> Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave
> This viperous slander enters."[1]

Knowing that Posthumous has unjustly condemned Imogen, Posthumous spares her, and, after giving her some of the queen's drugs that she may sustain her strength, he leaves her near a cave where Belarius, exiled instead of rewarded by the king for his bravery, lives with Guiderius and Arviragus, Cymbeline's sons, whom he had stolen, when they were very young, in revenge for his punishment.

Before Imogen reaches the cave, Shakespeare pictures the life of Belarius and her brothers in the mountainous, healthful region of Wales. In their conversation we learn of their hunting the deer for food, climbing the mountains, and enjoying the fresh morning air. These could be shown but inadequately with the setting provided by Elizabethan theatres. Nature appears to breed in them princely traits of character which rarely flourish in the court-

> "Bel. and, though train'd up thus meanly,
> I' the cave, wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit
> The roofs of palaces; and nature prompts them,
> In simple and low things to prince it, much
> Beyond the trick of others."[2]

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1 Shakespeare, Wm.: Cymbeline, Act iii, sc.4
2 Ibid., Act iii, sc. 3.

They welcome Imogen who, disguised as a boy, calls herself Fidele.

"Gui. Pray, draw near."

"Arv. The night to the owl, the morn to the lark less welcome."[1]

Fidele shares the natural life of the brothers. Belarius sees her resemblance to Arviragus and Guiderius, whom he characterizes by allusions revealing his own appreciation of nature in the extreme of its moods-

> "They are as gentle
> As zephyrs, blowing below the violet,
> Not wagging his sweet head: and yet as rough,
> Their royal blood enchaf'd, as the rudest wind,
> That by the top doth take the mountain pine,
> And make him stoop to the vale."[2]

We observe that the youths as well as their sister are idealized to show the influence of rural life.

Unfortunately Fidele has tasted the poison prepared by the queen and given her by Pisanio. She sickens and loses consciousness. Arviragus and Guiderius mourn her loss; and, in their grief, they make the flowers with which they would strew her grave personify Fidele-

> "Arv. With fairest flowers,
> While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
> I'll sweeten they sad grave: Thou shalt not lack
> The flower, that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor
> The azur'd harebell, like thy veins; no, nor
> The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
> Outsweeten'd not thy breath: the ruddock would,
> With charitable bill (O bill, sore-shaming
> Those rich-left heirs, that let their fathers lie
> Without a monument!) bring thee all this;
> Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
> To winter-ground thy corse."[3]

The colorings of Arviragus' flowers are like the delicate hues in Venus and Adonis. While the poem written in Shakespeare's

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1 Shakespeare, Wm.: Cymbeline, Act iii, sc. 6.
2 Ibid., Act iv, sc. 2
3 Ibid., loc. cit. Cf. Pericles IV, 1.

youth is like a Venetian painting that creates a picture of sensuous beauty through the technique of coloring, here in Cymbeline there is a careful choice of natural objects that harmonize with both her outward beauty and her inward beauty of nature and character. In such a use of nature Shakespeare could reveal his heroines as he conceived them in his imagination; for the boys taking women's parts could but very imperfectly represent them. The mention of the legend of the redbreast strewing the grave with flowers adds a pathos to the death of the youth.

Fortunately, Cornelius, suspecting the queen's treachery, substituted for the deadly mineral what would cause a prolonged sleep. When she awakens, she sees the beheaded body of Cloten which she mistakes for Posthumous'. She expresses her horror in the appeal-

> "But if there be
> Yet left in heaven as small a drop of pity
> As a wren's eye, fear'd gods, a part of it."[1]

Sullivan makes this reference to the wren's eye illustrate Shakespeare's use of the small things connected with bird life to intensify and add an unexpected dramatic force to language of the simplest kind.[2] By omitting the words, as a wren's eye, the emotion becomes less vital.

Soon after this event, the tragic happenings resolve themselves happily. Rome declares war against the Britons, and Posthumous returns to England to serve with Cymbeline's army. The king is captured, but Belarius and the two princes rescue him. Shakespeare lightens the tragi-comedy by making

1 Shakespeare, Wm.: Cymbeline, Act iv, sc. 2
2 Sullivan, E.: What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. The Nineteenth Century. 73 (1913) p. 786.

nature interpret the final denouement. Posthumous, in prison, has a vision in which the gods prophecy that his miseries are to end, and that he is to be reunited with Imogen. On awaking, he finds a paper on which is written-

"When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow: then shall Posthumous and his miseries, Britain be fortunate, and flourish in peace and plenty."[1]

After Posthumous is told how Iachimo deceived him, he recognizes Imogen in the disguised Fidele; and, likewise, Cymbeline, after hearing Belarius' story, identifies his two sons. Then the soothsayer interprets what Posthumous has read. The lion's whelp is Posthumous Leonatus, and the tender air, mollis aer or mulier, is Imogen. Cymbeline is the stately cedar; and Guiderius and Arviragus the two branches lopped away, and then jointed to the old stock. Not only is the figure literary, but Shakespeare so adapted it to Cymbeline as to add force to the dramatic solution of the plot.

Winter's Tale (1611)

Perdita is the lost princess of Winter's Tale. Disowned by her father, Leontes, king of Sicily, she is carried on a ship to the Bohemian coast and left there during a storm. While The Tempest would suggest a tragic outcome, in this play as in Cymbeline and The Tempest Shakespeare turns apparent ill to good use. A shepherd rescues Perdita, and she grows up in the romantic country atmosphere of Bohemia, which befits her royal virtues better than the court. Prince Florizel comes to woo her, and a sheep-shearing festival is made the occasion for a romantic scene. Though Shakespeare found the plot for

1 Shakespeare, Wm.: Cymbeline. Act V. sc. 4

Winter's Tale in Greene's Pandosto, this scene is entirely his own.[1] It shows Perdita with the flowers as she advances to greet those attending the fete; and it has emotional value of a dramatic kind in providing romantic atmosphere for the love of Florizel and Perdita. Her charms of personality, both in beauty of appearance and thought, are enhanced by the flowers, and her contemplation of their habits and their significance in relation to those at the festival. As Blunden wrote in Nature in English Poetry-

"In the Winter's Tale we are shown a lady more lovely in her thoughts than even Titania, but still a creation of the solitude of Shakespeare rather than his human experience. When Perdita is at her most entrancing, she is a spirit of the neurie of Flora; she is a flower become woman, or woman become flower, and her love blossoms into an air that no cloud can darken, nor summer's heat nor winter's wrath molest, all in flowers."[2]

"She radiates the spirit of the scene" according to Woodberry's criticism.[3] In her interpretation of the flowers she knows so well from her life outdoor, she imparts to them a breath of life like her own, sprightly and yet reposeful. They do not appear like the cut flowers they are, but as if they were each growing in their natural haunts, whether wild or cultivated. First she produces the flowers that befit the ages of Polixenes, father of Florizel, and Camillo-

"Reverend sirs,
For you there's rosemary, and rue; these keep
Seeming, and savour, all the winter long:
Grace, and remembrance be to you both,
And welcome to our shearing!"[4]

For younger men than Polixenes-

1 Brandes, Georg: William Shakespeare, p. 639.
2 Blunden, Edmund: Nature in English Poetry, p. 95.
3 Woodberry, George: The Appreciation of Literature, p. 42.
4 Shakespeare, Wm.: Winter's Tale. Act IV. sc. 3.

"Here's flowers for you!
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;
The marigold, that goes to bed with the sun,
And with him rises weeping; these are flowers
Of middle summer, and I think, they are given
To men of middle age: You are very welcome."

Then she turns to Florizel-

"Now, my fairest friend,
I would I had some flowers o' the spring, that might
Become your time of day; and yours, and yours,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenheads growing:- O Proserpina,
For the flowers, now, that, frighted, thou lett'st fall
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phoebus in his strength, a malady
Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and
The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flower-de-luce being one! O, these I lack,
To make you garlands of." [1]

How Shakespeare has linked the flowers of England's springtime to personify the romantic youth of Florizel and Perdita! The freshness of the daffodils suggest the swift, darting movements of the swallow on his return north. These are inferred by the mention of the habits of both, - the English daffodil of February or March and the swallow always an arrival of April or May. The pleasure of Shakespeare in these simple happenings of nature is revealed in these exquisits lyrics which Perdita speaks. But, while Shakespeare has placed these English flowers in Bohemia, he not only touched the daffodils with imagination by making them breathe of Stratford but has given them a mythological cast; for they are the flowers that Proserpina was gathering when she was snatched away by Pluto to the lower world. And Bohemia itself pictured on the seacoast, of which in truth it has none, adds another romantic element;

1 Shakespeare, Wm. Winter's Tale, Act iv, sc.3.

and the shepherds, though not Arcadian, reflect the idyllic scene. The nature background is not oversentimentalized, for the clownish Autoclus sings rollicking songs of nature as-

"When daffodils begin to peer,-
With, heigh! the doxy over the dale,-
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.
****
The lark, that tirra-lirra chants, the thrush and the jay:-
With hey! the sweet birds,
Are summer-songs for me and my aunts,
While we lie tumbling in the hay."[1]

The Tempest (1611)

The Tempest is a play of nature, and it is more spectacular than dramatic. Brandes sketched a scene Elizabethans might employ for its presentation. There are clouds above to suggest the storm. On one side a rock projects into the sea; on the other is a forest; and in the sea are ships, some actually moving.[2]

The Tempest presents a fairy island, as though enchanted. However, much realists may try to locate it in the Mediterranean, the Bermudas, or some northern climate with its season pointing to autumn because of the ripening berries and grain,[3] it is imaginary. The play opens with a tempest raging; and, at this time, Prospero narrates to his daughter, Miranda, how they chanced to be living on the island, how his brother and the king of Naples had committed them to the mercies of the sea on a ship all but ready to sink-, how

"They hoisted us
To cry to the sea that roar'd to us; to sigh
To the winds, whose pity, sighing back again,
Did us but loving wrong."[4]

1 Shakespeare, Wm.: Winter's Tale, Act iv, sc. 2.
2 Brandes, Georg: Wm. Shakespeare, p. 651
3 Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur: Shakespeare's Workmanship, p. 290.
4 Shakespeare, Wm.: The Tempest Act 1, sc. 2.

Arrived at the island whither the winds have driven them, they found shelter in a cave which they made their abode. But what might be a life of drudgery is changed to delight; for the island is full of spirits, and these Prospero rules with a magic charm learned from books. Unlike the fairies of Mid-Summer Night's Dream, who spend their time revelling in the forest and of their own accord playing pranks and confusing mortals, here they are under the mortal control of Prospero, who summons them to his assistance. Ariel is the light, obedient spirit of nature as his reply to Prospero indicates.

> "Ariel- All hail, great master! grave sir, hail! I come
> To swim, to dive, into the fire, to ride
> On the curl'd clouds, to thy strong bidding task
> Ariel and all his quality."[1]

Prospero has rescued Ariel from imprisonment in a pine where the fairy had been confined by Sycorax, mother of Caliban.

At this time, Prospero's enemies are sailing near the island; and with his magic he invokes Ariel to stir up a storm to wreck the ship. Ariel's light, fanciful description of how he has complied with his master's wishes gives a fairy aspect to the storm itself-

> "I boarded the king's ship: now on the beak,
> Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
> I flam'd amazement: sometimes, I'd divide,
> And burn in many places: on the top-mast,
> The yards, the bowsprit, would I flame distinctly;
> Then meet, and join; Jove's lightnings, the precursors
> Of the dreadful thunder-claps, more momentary
> And sight-outrunning were not; the fire, and cracks
> Of sulphurous roaring, the most mighty Neptune
> Seem'd to besiege, and make his bold waves tremble,
> Yea, his dread trident shake."[2]

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1 Shakespeare, Wm.: The Tempest, Act 1 sc. 2.
2 Ibid., Act 1, sc. 2.

Ariel sings and plays at various times throughout the play. Now he is a water-nymph, now a harpy to those having harmed Prospero, often invisible, now sprightly singing, now imitating the barks of dogs and wolves. Ferdinand hears Ariel's song-

> "Come unto these yellow sands,
> And then take hands:
> Court'sied when you have, and kiss'd,
> (The wild waves whist)
> Foot it featly here and there;
> And sweet sprites, the burden bear."[1]

Ariel is throughout the spirit which serves to draw together the characters, and in all cases to solve the difficulties. This song with its music leads Ferdinand to the cave where Miranda is, and from this time the enchanted island is a romantic background for the lovers, Ferdinand and Miranda.

Caliban is rude as Ariel is delicate. Grigg regarded Ariel as the spirit of undeveloped nature, and Caliban as the human being gone back to the plane of nature.[2] He is also termed the harsh nature spirit which does not yield easily to man's efforts in securing food from the soil and wood from the forest,[3] one of Caliban's duties being to carry wood for his master. While Ariel longs to be a spirit of freedom, Caliban grumbles at his master, cursing him with the evils of nature-

> "As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd
> With raven's feather from unwholesome fen,
> Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye,
> And blister you all over!"[4]

But even Caliban charmed by the strains of Ariel-

> "Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not,

1 Shakespeare, Wm.: The Tempest, Act 1, sc. 2
2 Griggs, Edward Howard: A Syllabus of Twelve Lectures, p. 35
3 Blunden, Edmund: Nature In English Poetry, p. 92-3.
4 Shakespeare, Wm.: loc. cit.

Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again: and, then, in dreaming,
The clouds, methought, would open, and show riches
Ready to drop on me; that, when I wak'd,
I cry'd to dream again."[1]

Caliban plots against the life of his master, and agrees to follow Trinculo and Stephano, a jester and a drunken butler, in his master's stead. He reveals to them his knowledge of nature -

"I'll show thee the best springs: I'll pluck thee berries.
I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough,
A plague upon the tyrant that I serve!
I'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee,
Thou wondrous man."

and

"I pr'ythee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;
And I, with my long nails, will dig thee pignuts;
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how
To snare the nimble marmozet; I'll bring thee
To clust'ring filberds, and sometimes I'll get thee
Young sea-mells from the rock. Wilt thou go with me?"[2]

Ariel serves Prospero in summoning the classic goddess of marriage, Juno, with Ceres, goddess of earth, for the nuptials of Ferdinand and Miranda in the masque of Iris.[3] Then Prospero frees the spirits, but, before he dismisses Ariel, he orders him to hunt and bring to punishment Caliban and his followers. This hunt with imaginary hounds is unlike the sporting hunts in Venus and Midsummer Night's Dream.[4] They pursue these men with the purpose of reforming them, and Caliban is changed in attitued when Ariel leads him in-

"Pro. Hey, Mounta in, Hey!
Ariel- Silver! there it goes, Silver!
Pro. Fury! Fury! there Tyrant, there, hark! hark!"

When Ariel thinks he is to be free, his joy finds ex-

1 Shakespeare, Wm.: The Tempest, Act. 111, sc. 2.
2 Ibid., Act. 11, sc. 2
3 Ibid., Act. 1V sc. 1
4 Ibid., loc. cit.

pression in the delicate, imaginative nature lyric-

"Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough."[1]

Miranda is represented as more than human, almost fairylike in her enchanted surroundings.

At the close of the masque Prospero interprets the classic gods and also the entire play with its actors and the island itself as but a dream, a creation of fancy-

"Our revels now are ended; these our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve:
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind: We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."[2]

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1 Shakespeare, Wm.: The Tempest, Act. V, sc. 1.
2 Ibid.,Act. lv, sc. i.

V

SUMMARY

We have presented our study from the point of view of what Shakespeare effected with the use of nature,- how much he succeeded in making nature an interpretative force connected with the characters and the action. We have given passages which we considered illustrate tendencies in Shakespeare's treatment of nature.

The first three chapters contain material introductory to the subject, Nature in Shakespeare. Thereby we have been able to make a gradual approach to the main topic, and then to discuss it without being hampered with the need of constantly supplying information about terms and comparisons we employ.

Chapter I is a basic study of nature in literature and the drama. We have explained the beginnings of myth as an emotional response to nature interpreted through the imagination, and likewise the essential need of both human emotion and imagination in all poetry dealing with nature. Curry believed that "Imagination gives us the power to penetrate to the heart of nature."[1] In stressing the subjective quality of the lyric in directly expressing the poet's emotion, we have shown how indirectly or objectively a dramatist, as Shakespeare was, must reveal his attitude towards nature by what the actors say. As we found, emotional interpretation of nature varies in worth. It is sometimes deep, sometimes shallow, and all degrees between these extremes. The greatest poets reveal many kinds of emotional responses to nature; they are constant in their portrayal of any one emotion; and the

1 Curry, S.S. Imagination and Dramatic Instinct, p.9.

emotions are the highest in type. Nor do all poets have equal power in expressing what they feel. Woodberry called expression the "nucleus of the artist's power";[1] and, in Shakespeare, we observe a genius for the conveying of his impression through the medium of words.

Emotional values in nature may be dramatic as well as poetic, if they are employed with the purpose of increasing the dramatic effect of a play. As Raymond wrote, "The object of dramatic painting is to reveal the effects upon particular characters or temperaments of particular occurrences or surroundings."[2] Nature scenes which harmonize with the dominant mood of a play help to create atmosphere. Likewise, the characters may allude to nature in such a way as to interpret their own personalities or those of others. Nature may be used to heighten emotion. It may hasten or retard action. For these dramatic purposes, lyrical use of nature may be made, if it be the means and not the end. Emerson said of Shakespeare, "He possesses the power of subordinating nature beyond all poets."[3] He interprets nature in its relation to man, even though we sometimes find, particularly in his earlier works, lyrical nature outweighing its dramatic significance.

Chapter II concerns Shakespeare more directly than Chapter I; for it deals with his contemporaries and their treatment of nature, and thereby shows how Shakespeare was influenced in his modes of writing by the spirit of the Elizabethan Age. Euphuism, the fad for making language decorative , to display wit, has traces in

1 Woodberry, Geo. Two Phases of Criticism: Historical and Esthetic, p.63.
2 Raymond, Geo. The Essentials of Aesthetics, p. 192.
3 Emerson, Ralph W. Nature, Addresses and Lectures , p.52.

Shakespeare's youthful writings where there are involved and cumulative figures from nature like the simile of the bees in Henry V. Even in comedies written as late as Much Ado About Nothing, nature allusions are a medium for the exchange of wit among the actors. Yet, in his later plays, there is less use of nature for word-play than in the first ones. In the tragedies nature becomes a dramatic agent; and, in the final comedies, keen enjoyment of nature in her most attractive form and aspect replaces the lighter comic uses.

Pastoralism influenced Shakespeare also; while he did not develop the pastoral -comedy, shepherds help romanticize his scenes. These are rarely as sentimental as the Arcadian atmosphere we noticed in Menaphon, but shepherds, though anglicized and less fanciful than those of the pastorals, are so much associated with love-making as to deepen the romantic atmosphere.

Elizabethans, having poor stage-setting, availed themselves of the opportunity to supplement actual scenery with word-painting in which they were adept. We have seen how Peele did this so as to emphasize the importance of thescenes. Shakespeare likewise, as Moorman stated, "made the shortcomings of the Elizabethan stage-carpenter and decorator the occasion for some of the most exquisite word-paintings."[1] Yet in all but his early attempts like Venus and Adonis and Romeo and Juliet, scenes are suggested rather than described with massing of details. The excellence of impressionistic scenery is evidenced by Curry, who said, "True poetry is but suggestion, which is most active in what is familiar."[2] The Elizabethans had fairy scenes, as we have illustrated in

1 Moorman, F.W. Interpretation of Nature in English Poetry, p. 217.
2 Curry, S.S. Imagination and Dramatic Instinct, p. 75.

Lyly's Endimion and Greene's James IV. But these were insignificant, when compared with Shakespeare's fairylands. It was Leigh Hunt's opinion that "Shakespeare was the first that turned fairies to poetical account, that bore them from their clownish neighborhood to the richest soils of imagination and fancy."[1]

Chapter III sketches Shakespeare's natural surroundings and reveals their advantages for one who observes the habits of nature with poetical inspiration. As we have shown, Shakespeare has often placed in the mouths of his actors words revealing a deep emotional reaction to nature. As Sullivan explained, "Shakespeare's mind was at all times so possessed with images and recollections of English rural life, that he refrained not from attributing a like possession to men of all sorts and conditions regardless of time, place, or circumstances. Prospero sets on his spirits in hunter's language by names well-known in Gloucestershire kennels. Ulysses compares Achilles sulking in his tent to a hart keeping thicket. The fallen Caesar suggests to Antony a noble hart, whose forest was the world in which he is bayed and slain by blood-stained hunters, Titus Andronicus proclaims a solemn hunting after the fashion of Gloucestershire. Egyptians, Athenians, and Romans are intimately acquainted with the coursing matches of Cotswold. Roderigo of Venice and Pandarus of Troy speak the language of English sportsmen. Theseus hunts the country round Athens with hounds as thoroughly English as was the horse of Adonis."[2]

1 Hunt, Leigh. Leigh Hunt as Poet and Essayist, p.472.
2 Sullivan, E. What Shakespeare Saw in Nature. The Nineteenth Century, 73(1913), p. 774-775.

In the main thesis we have shown Shakespeare's interpretation of nature in his plays and narrative poems. To summarize the leading issues of our thesis, we have presented material exemplifying the great variety of Shakespeare's uses of nature and the extent of their poetical and dramatic worth, We have shown how Shakespeare's youthful tendency to excessive description of nature was gradually replaced by the careful subordination of nature to man's needs. This does not mean that there is a sharp cleavage in the ways in which Shakespeare portrayed scenes; but it does mean that, in his maturity, Shakespeare frequently conveyed his impressions through suggestion, "the height of art". Moorman saw in Lucrece a "sympathetic interaction of nature and humanity"[1]; but it is inferior to what is in As You Like It, Macbeth, and King Lear. "Shakespeare knew what subtle interplay subsisted between the varying moods of Nature and the varying moods of man."[2]

Night could not be represented satisfactorilly on the Elizabethan stage. We have illustrated how artistically Shakespeare depicted its passing in Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet, and Hamlet. In each of these plays he has revealed a different type of human emotion responding to the approach of morning: (1) the intensity of tragic suspense before the murder of Caesar, (2) the romantic longing of Romeo and Juliet, and (3) the reaction of the guards to the appearance of the ghost in Hamlet. Thus Shakespeare repeated types of scenes, but with new dramatic force and inspiration. Shakespeare created both romantic and tragic atmosphere with the use of nature. For tragedy he stressed a darkness in connection with evil deeds which its blackness conceals, while in romantic scenes the shadows of night are made attractive by

1 Moorman, F.W. The Interpretation of Nature in English Poetry, p.220.
2 Ibid.,loc.cit.

by their harmony through some agent of color,- the moonbeams playing on the bank at Belmont.

Likewise, Shakespeare presented darkness so as to express different degrees of tragic atmosphere. The gloom of Juliet's tomb, the night of carousal at Venice in Othello, the cold night in Hamlet when the ghost appears, the starless night of the conspiracy in Julius Caesar, Macbeth's darkest of all nights, are all tragic, yet different in their imaginative treatment. They disclose a greater depth of tragic emotion than does the early poem, Lucrece, wherein the conscious attempt to make darkness of night harmonize with the spirit of tragedy, is a prelude to the later successful creation of tragic atmosphere.

Shakespeare made the willow signify sadness in both Hamlet and Othello; yet its connection with the death of the gentle Ophelia who has become crazed produces a variation from the emotion of sadness as revealed in the song of willow that recurs to Desdemona's mind as a premonition of her death. The same symbol has had different imaginative treatment to correspond with the situation and the personalities of the characters.

As with the darker elements of nature, so with its gayer moods, we notice the same type of scene, sometimes slightly, sometimes well developed. The forest as a romantic background in Two Gentlemen of Verona is in embryo like Arden of As You Like It. Shakespeare succeeded in making his romantic scenes show a realistic unreality by combining with English nature what has mythological, imaginary, and far-distant significance. In this way he has given an illusion of reality, and at the same time he has made the scene romantic.

Of the many dramatic uses we have exemplified in quotations from Shakespeare, we recapitulate the following- Shakespeare strengthened the impression of dramatic action of characters by allusion to nature. In Henry V the chorus interprets both the scene and the action. Songs serve to enter characters on the stage; they also enhance romantic atmosphere as in Love's Labour's Lost; like "Hark, hark, the lark", they are intended to stimulate the love of ladies for their swains. They reveal character by the attitude of the characters to nature portrayed in the songs; they show attitude towards circumstances as in the Greenwood song of As You Like It. Here most of the characters "fleet the time carelessly", but Jacques is cynical in his mood when Amiens sings the song. We notice the kindly spirit of Shakespeare's fairies in their lullaby to Titania who is to be protected from all harm. Bottom sings to ward off his fear, and Ariel's songs are as light and dainty as the spirit himself.

Moorman said that Shakespeare saw poetry in all nature, in the sweep of the storm across the moor in Lear as much as in the fairy scenes.[1] The raging of the storm parallels Lear's own passions, and thus intensifies their significance, With less force, yet with dramatic power, Othello personifies the terrific Pontic sea to emphasize his own rage. Brutus and Wolsey philosophize with the aid of figures from nature. Flowers are contemplated by Perdita in Winter's Tale. They reveal personal beauty and character as in both Winter's Tale and Cymbeline. All these but show the infinite variety in which Shakespeare made nature give dramatic interpretation.

1 Moorman, F.W. Interpretation of Nature in English Poetry, p.216

The poetic uses which Shakespeare made of nature are also praiseworthy. We have seen how incidental nature appeared in his dramas, as though it was necessary for the accomplishment of some dramatic motive; yet his appreciation of nature itself is evident in such passages as those about Mab's chariot, in Ariel's songs, and in the beautiful night at Belmont. Moreover in the plays of his maturity, one allusion to nature is often complex, in that it serves several purposes, both poetic and dramatic. For instance, Perdita's interpretation of her flowers, supplies a romantic background, discloses personality, and is appreciative of what is delightful in nature. Yet, despite their complexity, the references to nature are always clear to interpret. Finally two such fairylands as those in Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest bespeak the power of Shakespeare to recreate nature.

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1 Note- In a thesis of this type in which material is widely scattered and few books deal mainly with its subject, it is necessary to consult a large number of books either for reference or for what may be of value on pages rarely consecutive. Hence, we are adding this supplementary list to our regular bibliography.

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